



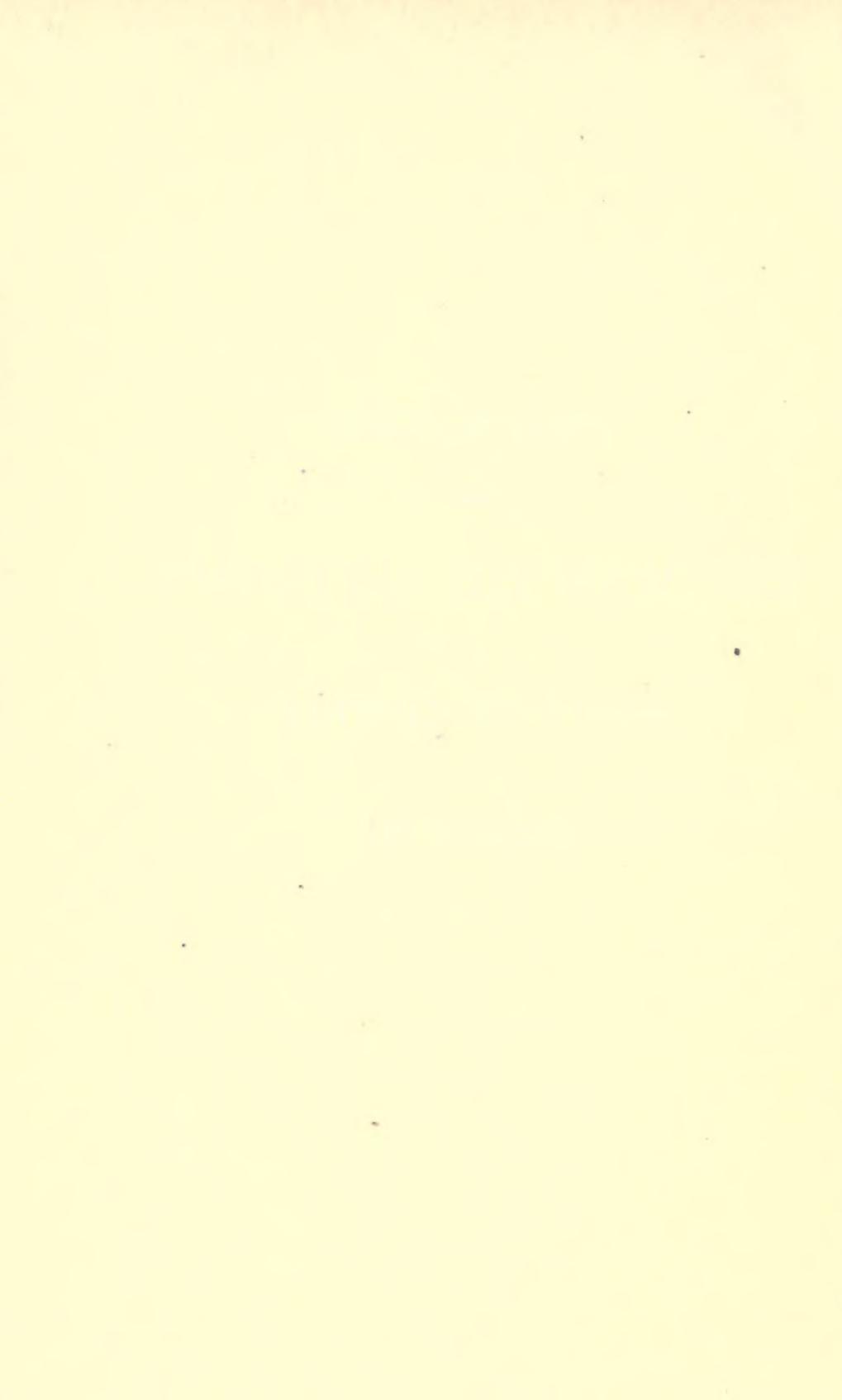
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THE WORKS
OF
THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

POPULAR EDITION.

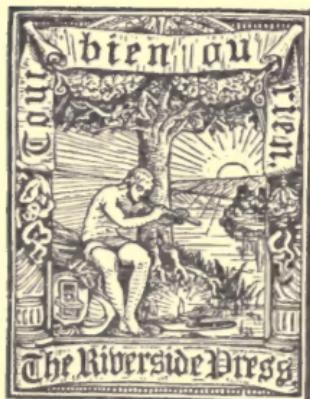
VOLUME VII.



ESSAYS IN ANCIENT HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES.

BY

THOMAS DE QUINCEY.



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PUBLISHERS' ADVERTISEMENT.

THE present edition is a reissue of the Works of Thomas De Quincey. The series is based upon the American Edition of De Quincey's Works, published originally in twenty-two volumes. After that edition was issued, a complete English edition was published in Edinburgh and was edited and revised in part by the author. This edition contained changes and additions, and the opportunity has been taken, in reissuing the American edition, to incorporate the new material which appeared in the English edition. At the same time, the arrangement of the several productions is more systematic and orderly than was possible when the collection was first made, at different intervals, under difficulties which render the work of the first editor especially praiseworthy. In the final volume, an introduction to the series sets forth the plan carried out in this new arrangement, and that volume also contains a very full index to the entire series. Throughout the series, the notes of the editor are distinguished from those of the author by being inclosed in brackets [].

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FROM THE AUTHOR, TO THE AMERICAN EDITOR
OF HIS WORKS.*

THESE papers I am anxious to put into the hands of your house, and, so far as regards the U. S., of *your* house exclusively; not with any view to further emolument, but as an acknowledgment of the services which you have already rendered me: namely, first, in having brought together so widely scattered a collection,—a difficulty which in my own hands by too painful an experience I had found from nervous depression to be absolutely insurmountable; secondly, in having made me a participator in the pecuniary profits of the American edition, without solicitation or the shadow of any expectation on my part, without any legal claim that I could plead, or equitable warrant in established usage, solely and merely upon your own spontaneous motion. Some of these new papers, I hope, will not be without their value in the eyes of those who have taken an interest in the original series. But at all events, good or bad, they are now tendered to the appropriation of your individual house, the MESSRS. TICKNOR AND FIELDS, according to the amplest extent of any power to make such a transfer that I may be found to possess by law or custom in America.

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Ever believe me, my dear sir,

Your faithful and obliged,

THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

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PREFACE.

[The following are brief general notes with which Mr. De Quincey introduced "The Cæsars," and Plato's "Republic" when revising the latest edition of his works.]

"THE CÆSARS," it may be right to mention, was written in a situation which denied me the use of books; so that with the exception of a few penciled extracts in a pocket-book from the Augustan history, I was obliged to depend upon my memory for materials, in so far as respected facts. These materials for the Western Empire are not more scanty than meagre; and in that proportion so much the greater is the temptation which they offer to free and skeptical speculation. To this temptation I have yielded intermittently; but from a fear (perhaps a cowardly fear) of being classed as a dealer in licentious paradox, I checked myself exactly where the largest license might have been properly allowed to a bold spirit of incredulity. In particular, I cannot bring myself to believe, nor ought therefore to have assumed the tone of a believer, in the inhuman atrocities charged upon the earlier Cæsars. Guided by my own instincts of truth and probability, I should, for instance, have summarily exploded the most revolting among the crimes imputed to Nero.

But too often, writers who have been compelled to deal in ghastly horrors form a taste for such scenes ; and sometimes, as may be seen exemplified in those who record the French “ Reign of Terror,” become angrily credulous, and impatient of the slightest hesitation in going along with the maniacal excesses recorded. Apparently Suetonius suffered from that morbid appetite. Else would he have countenanced the hyperbolic extravagances current about the murder of Agrippina ? What motive had Nero for murdering his mother ? or, assuming the slightest motive, what difficulty in accomplishing this murder by secret agencies ? What need for the elaborate contrivance (as in some costly pantomime) of self-dissolving ships ? But waiving all this superfluity of useless mechanism, which by requiring many hands in working it must have multiplied the accomplices in the crime, and have published his intentions to all Rome, how do these statements tally with the instant resort of the lady herself, upon reaching land, to the affectionate sympathy of her son ? Upon this sympathy she counted : but how, if all Rome knew that, like a hunted hare, she was then running on the traces of her last double before receiving her death-blow ? Such a crime, so causeless as regarded provocation, so objectless as regarded purpose, and so revolting to the primal impulses of nature, would, unless popularly viewed as the crime of a maniac, have alienated from Nero even his poor simple nurse, and other dependants, who showed for many years after his death the strength of their attachment by adorning his grave with flowers, and by inflicting such vindictive insults as they could upon the corpse of his antagonist, Galba.

Meantime that he might be insane, and entitled to the excuse of insanity, is possible. If not, what a monstrous part in the drama is played by the Roman people, who, after this alleged crime, and believing it, yet sat with tranquillity to hear his musical performances! But a taint of insanity certainly *did* prevail in the blood of the earlier Cæsars, *i. e.*, down to Nero.

Over and above this taint of physical insanity, we should do well to allow for the preternatural tendency towards moral insanity generated and nursed by the anomalous situation of the *Imperator*—a situation unknown before or since; in which situation the license allowed to the individual, after the popular *comitia* had virtually become extinct, hid too often from his eye this perilous fact, that in one solitary direction, viz., in regard to the representative functions which he discharged as embodying the Roman majesty, he, the supreme of men upon earth, had a narrower license or discretionary power of action than any slave upon whose neck he trode. Better for *him*, for his own comfort in living, and for his chance of quiet in dying, that he should violate the moral sense by every act of bloody violence or of brutal appetite, than that he should trifle with the heraldic sanctity of his Imperial robe.

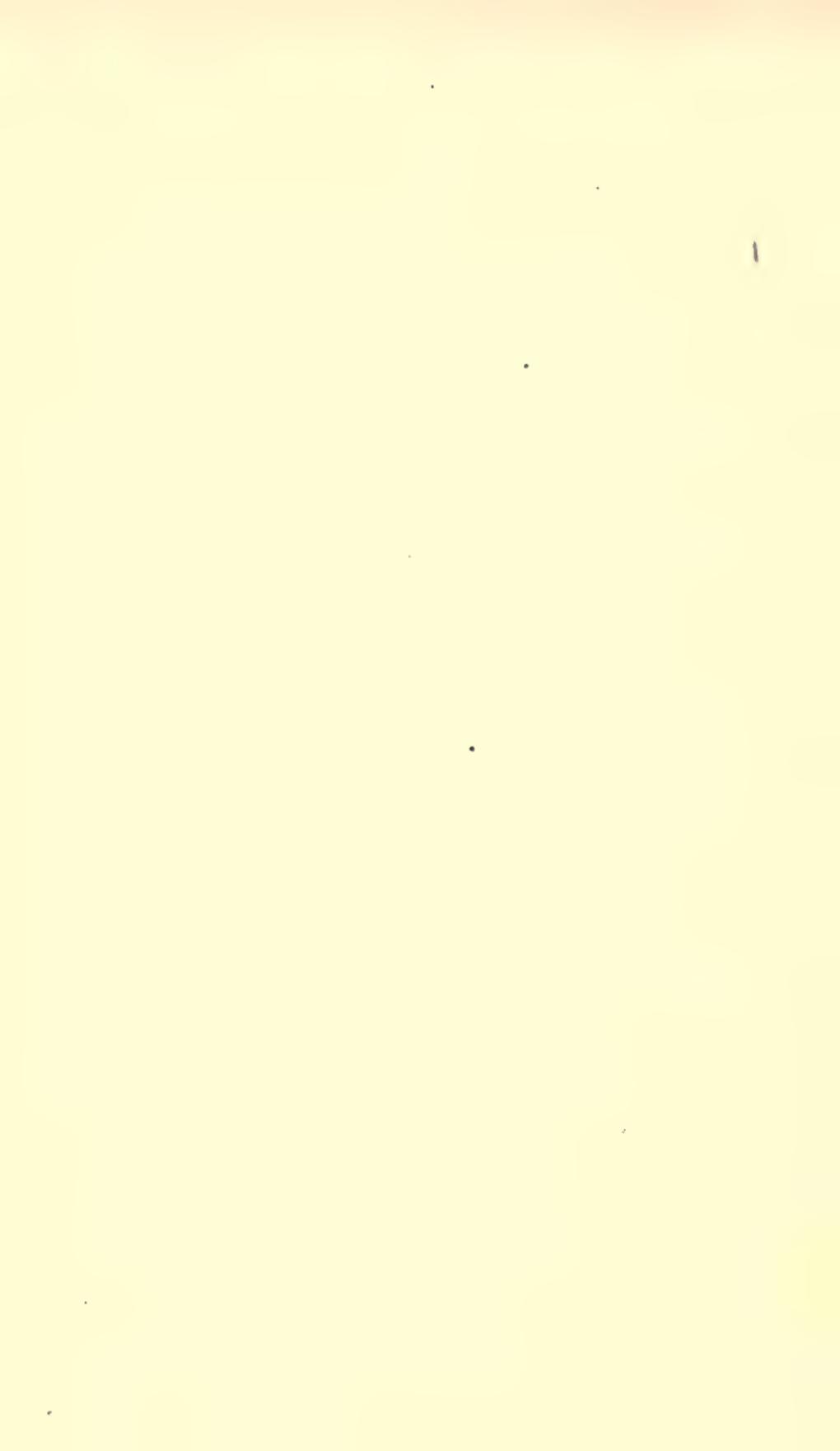
The readers of Plato, if such a class anywhere exists, must be aware of his profound failure in an attempt to explore the etymology of a few Grecian words. Such a failure, considering the etymological resources then at the command of Greek philology, was inevitable. It is no subject for blame. But not the

less it suggests, as its own direct consequence, what *is* a subject for the heaviest, viz., the obstinate vassalage to purely *verbal* fancies, which is continually a fruitful source of erring and misleading speculation to Plato. In the last book of "The Republic" we have a lively instance of this. Plato there argues two separate questions: first, the Immortality of the Soul (more elaborately treated in the "Phædo"); secondly, the grounds upon which he expelled the Poets, and Homer beyond all others, from his immaculate Commonwealth. Of this ideal Commonwealth it is sufficient to say, that the one capital vice which has ruined Asia, and laid her (speaking generally) a contemptible and helpless victim at the feet of Christendom, viz., polygamy and sexual effeminacy, carried to the last conceivable excesses, is by Plato laid down deliberately as the basis of his social system. And, as if this were not enough, infanticide is superadded as the crown and glorifying *aureola* of the whole diabolical economy. After this, the reader will feel some curiosity to learn what it is by which the Poets could signalize their immortality in Plato's eyes. The Platonic reason assigned for tabooing the "Iliad" and "Odyssey," and the whole of the Tragic drama, is this: and it will be seen that the first manifestation of the evil redressed lies in the scenic poets, but the fountain of the offence lies in Homer. Tragedy, says Plato, seeks as its main object to extort tears and groans from the audience in sympathy with the distress on the stage. Well, why not? Because there is some obligation (where seated, or by whom enacted, Plato is careful to conceal) which makes such sympathy, or such expressions of sympathy, improper

But in what way improper? The insinuation is — as being effeminate, and such as men rightly seek to hide. Here, then, we have, as the main legislatorial sanction and rule of conduct, a sensitive horror of indecorum. And the supposed law, or rule, to which Plato appeals for his justification, is a pure verbal chimera, without even a plausible ground. And for such a reason the sole noble revelation of moral feeling in Grecian poetry is laid under an interdict. But why is Homer compromised by this interdict? Simply on the ground (a most false one) that he is originally answerable for the dramatic stories employed by the scenic poets. Now, in order to show the careless reading of Plato, it is sufficient to remark briefly, that a large proportion of the Greek tragedies move by terror, by horror, by sympathy with the unknown mysteries surrounding human nature, and are of a nature to repel tears; and that for three out of four such ground-works of the tragic poetry Homer is noways responsible. It is also altogether overlooked by Plato that in the grandeur of the choral music, in the mazes of the symbolic dances, and in the awful magnitude of the spectacle (spectacle and spectators taken as a whole), a provision is made for elevating the mind far above the region of effeminate sensibilities. Milton, with his Christian standard of purity and holiness, found *that* beyond measure noble which Plato, the organizer of polygamy and wholesale infanticide, rejects as immoral!

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THE CÆSARS.

THE majesty of the Roman Cæsar Semper Augustus has never yet been fully appreciated ; nor has any man yet explained sufficiently in what respects this title and this office were absolutely unique. There was but one Rome : no other city, as we are satisfied by the collation of many facts, has ever rivalled this astonishing metropolis in the grandeur of magnitude ; and not many — perhaps if we except the cities built under Grecian auspices along the line of three thousand miles, from Western Capua or Syracuse to the Euphrates and oriental Palmyra, none at all — in the grandeur of architectural display. Speaking even of London, we ought in all reason to say — the *Nation of London*, and not the City of London ; but of Rome in her palmy days, nothing less could be said in the naked severity of logic. A million and a half of souls¹ — that population, apart from any other distinctions, is *per se* for London, a justifying ground for such a classification ; *& fortiori*, then, will it belong to a city which counted from one horn to the other of its mighty suburbs not less than four millions of inhabitants at the very least, as we resolutely maintain after reviewing all that has been written on that much

vexed theme, and very probably half as many more Republican Rome had her *prerogative* tribe ; the earth has its *prerogative* city ; and that city was Rome.

As was the city, such was its prince — mysterious, solitary, unique. Each was to the other an adequate counterpart, each reciprocally that perfect mirror which reflected as it were *in alia materia*, those incommunicable attributes of *grandeur*, that under the same shape and denomination never upon this earth were destined to be revived. Rome has not been repeated ; neither has Cæsar. *Ubi Cæsar, ibi Roma,* was a maxim of Roman jurisprudence. And the same maxim may be translated into a wider meaning ; in which it becomes true also for our historical experience. Cæsar and Rome have flourished and expired together. The illimitable attributes of the Roman prince, boundless and comprehensive as the universal air, — like that also bright and apprehensible to the most vagrant eye, yet in parts (and those not far removed) unfathomable as outer darkness, (for no chamber in a dungeon could shroud in more impenetrable concealment a deed of murder than the upper chambers of the air,) — these attributes, so impressive to the imagination, and which all the subtlety of the Roman² wit could as little fathom as the fleets of Cæsar could traverse the Polar basin, or unlock the gates of the Pacific, are best symbolized, and find their most appropriate exponent, in

the illimitable city itself — that Rome, whose centre, the Capitol, was immovable as Teneriffe or Atlas, but whose circumference was shadowy, uncertain, restless, and advancing as the frontiers of her all-conquering empire. It is false to say, that with Cæsar came the destruction of Roman greatness. Peace, hollow rhetoricians ! Until Cæsar came, Rome was a minor ; by him, she attained her majority, and fulfilled her destiny. Caius Julius, you say, deflowered the virgin purity of her civil liberties. Doubtless, then, Rome had risen immaculate from the arms of Sylla and of Marius. But, if it were Caius Julius who deflowered Rome, if under him she forfeited her dowry of civic purity, if to him she first unloosed her maiden zone, then be it affirmed boldly — that she reserved her greatest favors for the noblest of her wooers, and we may plead the justification of Falconbridge for his mother's transgressions with the lion-hearted king — such a sin was self-ennobled. Did Julius deflower Rome ? Then, by that consummation, he caused her to fulfil the functions of her nature ; he compelled her to exchange the imperfect and inchoate condition of a mere *fæmina* for the perfections of a *mulier*. And metaphor apart, we maintain that Rome lost no liberties by the mighty Julius. That which in tendency, and by the spirit of her institutions ; that which, by her very corruptions and abuses co-operating with her laws, Rome promised

and involved in the germ ; even that, and nothing less or different, did Rome unfold and accomplish under this Julian violence. The rape [if such it were] of Cæsar, her final Romulus, completed for Rome that which the rape under Romulus, her earliest Cæsar, had prosperously begun. And thus by one godlike man was a nation-city matured ; and from the everlasting and nameless³ city was a man produced — capable of taming her indomitable nature, and of forcing her to immolate her wild virginity to the state best fitted for the destined ‘Mother of empires.’ Peace, then, rhetoricians, false threnodists of false liberty ! hollow chanters over the ashes of a hollow republic ! Without Cæsar, we affirm a thousand times that there would have been no perfect Rome ; and, but for Rome, there could have been no such man as Cæsar.

Both, then, were immortal ; each worthy of each, and the *Cui viget nihil simile aut secundum* of the poet, was as true of one as of the other. For, if by comparison with Rome other cities were but villages, with even more propriety it may be asserted, that after the Roman Cæsars all modern kings, cesars, or emperors, are mere phantoms of royalty. The Cæsar of Western Rome — he only of all earthly potentates, past or to come, could be said to reign as a *monarch*, that is, as a solitary king. He was not the greatest of princes, simply because there was no other but him.

self. There were doubtless a few outlying rulers, of unknown names and titles upon the margins of his empire, there were tributary lieutenants and barbarous *reguli*, the obscure vassals of his sceptre, whose homage was offered on the lowest step of his throne, and scarcely known to him but as objects of disdain. But these feudatories could no more break the unity of his empire, which embraced the whole ὁἰκουμένη — the total habitable world as then known to geography, or recognized by the muse of History — than at this day the British empire on the sea can be brought into question or made conditional, because some chief of Owyhee or Tongataboo should proclaim a momentary independence of the British trident, or should even offer a transient outrage to her sovereign flag. Such a *tempestas in matulâ* might raise a brief uproar in his little native archipelago, but too feeble to reach the shores of Europe by an echo — or to ascend by so much as an infantine *susurrus* to the ears of the British Neptune. Parthia, it is true, might pretend to the dignity of an empire. But her sovereigns, though sitting in the seat of the great king, (ο βασιλεὺς,) were no longer the rulers of a vast and polished nation. They were regarded as barbarians — potent only by their standing army, not upon the larger basis of civic strength ; and, even under this limitation, they were supposed to owe more to the remoteness of their position — their climate, their inaccessibility except through

arid and sultry deserts — than to intrinsic resources, such as could be permanently relied on in a serious trial of strength between the two powers. The kings of Parthia, therefore, were far enough from being regarded in the light of antagonistic forces to the majesty of Rome. And, these withdrawn from the comparison, who else was there — what prince, what king, what potentate of any denomination, to break the universal calm, that through centuries continued to lave, as with the quiet undulations of summer lakes, the sacred footsteps of the Cæsarean throne? The Byzantine court which, merely as the inheritor of some fragments from that august throne, was drunk with excess of pride, surrounded itself with elaborate expressions of grandeur beyond what mortal eyes were supposed able to sustain.

These fastidious, and sometimes fantastic ceremonies, originally devised as the very extremities of anti-barbarism, were often themselves but too nearly allied in spirit to the barbaresque in taste. In reality, some parts of the Byzantine court ritual were arranged in the same spirit as that of China or the Burman empire; or fashioned by anticipation, as one might think, on the practice of that Oriental Cham, who daily proclaims by sound of trumpet to the kings in the four corners of the earth — that they, having dutifully awaited the close of *his* dinner, may now with his royal license go to their own.

From such vestiges of *derivative* grandeur, propagated to ages so remote from itself, and sustained by manners so different from the spirit of her own,—we may faintly measure the strength of the original impulse given to the feelings of men by the *sacred* majesty of the Roman throne. How potent must that splendor have been, whose mere reflection shot rays upon a distant crown, under another heaven, and across the wilderness of fourteen centuries ! Splendor, thus transmitted, thus sustained, and thus imperishable, argues a transcendent in the basis of radical power. Broad and deep must those foundations have been laid, which could support an ‘arch of empire’ rising to that giddy altitude—an altitude which sufficed to bring it within the ken of posterity to the sixtieth generation.

Power is measured by resistance. Upon such a scale, if it were applied with skill, the *relations* of greatness in Rome to the greatest of all that has gone before her, and has yet come after her, would first be adequately revealed. The youngest reader will know that the grandest forms in which the *collective* might of the human race has manifested itself, are the four monarchies. Four times have the distributive forces of nations gathered themselves, under the strong compression of the sword, into mighty aggregates—denominated *Universal Empires*, or Monarchies. These are noticed in the Holy Scriptures: and it is upon

their warrant that men have supposed no fifth monarchy or universal empire possible in an earthly sense; but that, whenever such an empire arises, it will have Christ for its head; in other words, that no fifth *monarchia* can take place until Christianity shall have swallowed up all other forms of religion, and shall have gathered the whole family of man into one fold under one all-conquering Shepherd. Hence⁴ the fanatics of 1650, who proclaimed Jesus for their king, and who did sincerely anticipate his near advent in great power, and under some personal manifestation, were usually styled *Fifth-Monarchists*.

However, waiving the question (interesting enough in itself) — Whether upon earthly principles a fifth universal empire could by possibility arise in the present condition of knowledge for man individually, and of organization for man in general — this question waived, and confining ourselves to the comparison of those four monarchies which actually have existed, — of the Assyrian or earliest, we may remark, that it found men in no state of cohesion. This cause, which came in aid of its first foundation, would probably continue; and would diminish the *intensity* of the power in the same proportion as it promoted its *extension*. This monarchy would be absolute only by the personal presence of the monarch; elsewhere, from mere defect of organization, it would and must betray the total imperfections of an elementary state, and of a first

experiment. More by the weakness inherent in such a constitution, than by its own strength, did the Persian spear prevail against the Assyrian. Two centuries revolved, seven or eight generations, when Alexander found himself in the same position as Cyrus for building a third monarchy, and aided by the self-same vices of luxurious effeminacy in his enemy, confronted with the self-same virtues of enterprise and hardihood in his compatriot soldiers. The native Persians, in the earliest and very limited import of that name, were a poor and hardy race of mountaineers. So were the men of Macedon; and neither one tribe nor the other found any adequate resistance in the luxurious occupants of Babylonia. We may add with respect to these two earliest monarchies, that the Assyrian was undefined with regard to space, and the Persian fugitive with regard to time. But for the third — the Grecian or Macedonian — we know that the arts of civility, and of civil organization, had made great progress before the Roman strength was measured against it. In Macedon, in Achaia, in Syria, in Asia Minor, in Egypt, — everywhere the members of this Empire have begun to knit; the cohesion was far closer, the development of their resources more complete; the resistance therefore by many hundred degrees more formidable: consequently, by the fairest inference, the power in that proportion greater which laid the foundation of this last great monarchy. It is

probable, indeed, both *à priori*, and upon the evidence of various facts which have survived, that each of the four great empires successively triumphed over an antagonist, barbarous in comparison of itself, and each by and through that very superiority in the arts and policy of civilization.

Rome, therefore, which came last in the succession, and swallowed up the three great powers that had *seriatim* cast the human race into one mould, and had brought them under the unity of a single will, entered by inheritance upon all that its predecessors in that career had appropriated, but in a condition of far ampler development. Estimated merely by longitude and latitude, the territory of the Roman empire was the finest by much that has ever fallen under a single sceptre. Amongst modern empires, doubtless, the Spanish of the sixteenth century, and the British of the present, cannot but be admired as prodigious growths out of so small a stem. In that view they will be endless monuments in attestation of the marvels which are lodged in civilization. But considered in and for itself, and with no reference to the proportion of the creating forces, each of these empires has the great defect of being disjointed, and even insusceptible of perfect union. It is in fact no *vinculum* of social organization which held them together, but the ideal *vinculum* of a common fealty, and of submission to the same sceptre. This is not like the tie of man-

mers, operative even where it is not perceived, but like the distinctions of geography — existing to-day, forgotten to-morrow — and abolished by a stroke of the pen, or a trick of diplomacy. Russia, again, a mighty empire as respects the simple grandeur of magnitude, builds her power upon sterility. She has it in her power to seduce an invading foe into vast circles of starvation, of which the radii measure a thousand leagues. Frost and snow are confederates of her strength. She is strong by her very weakness. But Rome laid a belt about the Mediterranean of a thousand miles in breadth ; and within that zone she comprehended not only all the great cities of the ancient world, but so perfectly did she lay the garden of the world in every climate, and for every mode of natural wealth, within her own ring-fence, that since that era no land, no part and parcel of the Roman empire, has ever risen into strength and opulence, except where unusual artificial industry has availed to counteract the tendencies of nature. So entirely had Rome engrossed whatsoever was rich by the mere bounty of native endowment.

Vast, therefore, unexampled, immeasurable, was the basis of natural power upon which the Roman throne reposed. The military force which put Rome in possession of this inordinate power, was certainly in some respects artificial ; but the power itself was natural, and not subject to the ebbs and flows which attend the

commercial empires of our days, (for all are in part commercial.) The depression, the reverses, of Rome, were confined to one shape — famine; terrific shape, doubtless, but one which levies its penalty of suffering not by elaborate processes that do not exhaust their total cycle in less than long periods of years. Fortunately for those who survive, no arrears of misery are allowed by this scourge of ancient days;⁵ the total penalty is paid down at once. As respected the hand of man, Rome slept for ages in absolute security. She could suffer only by the wrath of Providence; and, so long as she continued to be Rome, for many a generation she only of all the monarchies has feared no mortal hand,⁶

—— ‘God and his Son except,
Created thing naught valued she nor shunned.’

That the possessor and wielder of such enormous power — power alike admirable for its extent, for its intensity, and for its consecration from all counter-forces which could restrain it, or endanger it — should be regarded as sharing in the attributes of supernatural beings, is no more than might naturally be expected. All other known power in human hands has either been extensive, but wanting in intensity — or intense, but wanting in extent — or, thirdly, liable to permanent control and hazard from some antagonist power commensurate with itself. But the Roman power, in its centuries of grandeur, involved every mode o'

strength, with absolute immunity from all kinds and degrees of weakness. It ought not, therefore, to surprise us that the emperor, as the depositary of this charmed power, should have been looked upon as a *sacred* person, and the imperial family considered as a '*divina domus*.' It is an error to regard this as excess of adulation, or as built *originally* upon hypocrisy. Undoubtedly the expressions of this feeling are sometimes gross and overcharged, as we find them in the very greatest of the Roman poets: for example, it shocks us to find a fine writer, in anticipating the future canonization of his patron, and his enstalment amongst the heavenly hosts, begging him to keep his distance warily from this or that constellation, and to be cautious of throwing his weight into either hemisphere, until the scale of proportions were accurately adjusted. These doubtless are passages degrading alike to the poet and his subject. But why? Not because they ascribe to the emperor a sanctity which he had not in the minds of men universally, or which even to the writer's feeling was exaggerated, but because it was expressed coarsely, and as a *physical* power: now, everything physical is measurable by weight, motion, and resistance; and is therefore definite. But the very essence of whatsoever is supernatural lies in the indefinite. That power, therefore, with which the minds of men invested the emperor, was vulgarized by this coarse translation into the region of physics. Else it is evi-

dent, that any power which, by standing above all human control, occupies the next relation to superhuman modes of authority, must be invested by all minds alike with some dim and undefined relation to the sanctities of the next world. Thus, for instance, the Pope, as the father of Catholic Christendom, could not but be viewed with awe by any Christian of deep feeling, as standing in some relation to the true and unseen Father of the spiritual body. Nay, considering that even false religions, as those of Pagan mythology, have probably never been utterly stripped of all vestige of truth, but that every such mode of error has perhaps been designed as a process, and adapted by Providence to the case of those who were capable of admitting no more perfect shape of truth; even the heads of such superstitions (the Dalai Lama, for instance) may not unreasonably be presumed as within the cognizance and special protection of Heaven. Much more may this be supposed of him to whose care was confided the weightier part of the human race; who had it in his power to promote or to suspend the progress of human improvement; and of whom, and the motions of whose will, the very prophets of Judea took cognizance. No nation, and no king, was utterly divorced from the councils of God. Palestine, as a central chamber of God's administration, stood in some relation to all. It has been remarked, as a mysterious and significant fact, that the founders of the

great empires all had some connection, more or less, with the temple of Jerusalem. Melancthon even observes it in his Sketch of Universal History, as worthy of notice — that Pompey died, as it were, within sight of that very temple which he had polluted. Let us not suppose that Paganism, or Pagan nations, were therefore excluded from the concern and tender interest of Heaven. They also had their place allowed. And we may be sure that, amongst them, the Roman emperor, as the great accountant for the happiness of more men, and men more cultivated, than ever before were intrusted to the motions of a single will, had a special, singular, and mysterious relation to the secret counsels of Heaven.

Even we, therefore, may lawfully attribute some sanctity to the Roman emperor. That the Romans did so with absolute sincerity is certain. The altars of the emperor had a twofold consecration ; to violate them, was the double crime of treason and heresy. In his appearances of state and ceremony, the fire, the sacred fire *πόμπεια*, was carried in ceremonial solemnity before him ; and every other circumstance of divine worship attended the emperor in his lifetime.⁷

To this view of the imperial character and relations must be added one single circumstance, which in some measure altered the whole for the individual who happened to fill the office. The emperor *de facto* might be viewed under two aspects ; there was the

man, and there was the office. In his office he ~~was~~ immortal and sacred: but as a question might still be raised, by means of a mercenary army, as to the claims of the particular individual who at any time filled the office, the very sanctity and privilege of the character with which he was clothed might actually be turned against himself; and here it is, at this point, that the character of Roman emperor became truly and mysteriously awful. Gibbon has taken notice of the extraordinary situation of a subject in the Roman empire who should attempt to fly from the wrath of the crown. Such was the ubiquity of the emperor that this ~~was~~ absolutely hopeless. Except amongst pathless deserts or barbarous nomads, it was impossible to find even a transient sanctuary from the imperial pursuit. If he went down to the sea, there he met the emperor: if he took the wings of the morning, and fled to the uttermost parts of the earth, there also was the emperor or his lieutenants. But the same omnipresence of imperial anger and retribution which withered the hopes of the poor humble prisoner, met and confounded the emperor himself, when hurled from his giddy elevation by some fortunate rival. All the kingdoms of the earth, to one in that situation, became but so many wards of the same infinite prison. Flight, if it were even successful for the moment, did but a little retard his inevitable doom. And so evident was this, that hardly in one instance did the fallen prince *attempt*

to fly, but passively met the death which was inevitable, in the very spot where ruin had overtaken him. Neither was it possible even for a merciful conqueror to show mercy; for, in the presence of an army so mercenary and factious, his own safety was but too deeply involved in the extermination of rival pretenders to the crown.

Such, amidst the sacred security and inviolability of the office, was the hazardous tenure of the individual. Nor did his dangers always arise from persons in the rank of competitors and rivals. Sometimes it menaced him in quarters which his eye had never penetrated, and from enemies too obscure to have reached his ear. By way of illustration we will cite a case from the life of the Emperor Commodus, which is wild enough to have furnished the plot of a romance — though as well authenticated as any other passage in that reign. The story is narrated by Herodian, and the circumstances are these: — A slave of noble qualities, and of magnificent person, having liberated himself from the degradations of bondage, determined to avenge his own wrongs by inflicting continual terror upon the town and neighborhood which had witnessed his humiliation. For this purpose he resorted to the woody recesses of the province, (somewhere in the modern Transylvania,) and, attracting to his wild encampment as many fugitives as he could, by degrees he succeeded in forming and training a very formidable troop of free-

booters. Partly from the energy of his own nature, and partly from the neglect and remissness of the provincial magistrates, the robber captain rose from less to more, until he had formed a little army, equal to the task of assaulting fortified cities. In this stage of his adventures, he encountered and defeated several of the imperial officers commanding large detachments of troops; and at length grew of consequence sufficient to draw upon himself the emperor's eye, and the honor of his personal displeasure. In high wrath and disdain at the insults offered to his eagles by this fugitive slave, Commodus fulminated against him such an edict as left him no hope of much longer escaping with impunity.

Public vengeance was now awakened; the imperial troops were marching from every quarter upon the same centre; and the slave became sensible that in a very short space of time he must be surrounded and destroyed. In this desperate situation he took a desperate resolution: he assembled his troops, laid before them his plan, concerted the various steps for carrying it into effect, and then dismissed them as independent wanderers. So ends the first chapter of the tale.

The next opens in the passes of the Alps, whither by various routes, of seven or eight hundred miles in extent, these men had threaded their way in manifold disguises through the very midst of the emperor's camps. According to this man's gigantic enterprise in which the means were as audacious as the purpose

the conspirators were to rendezvous, and first to recognize each other at the gates of Rome. From the Danube to the Tiber did this band of robbers severally pursue their perilous routes through all the difficulties of the road and the jealousies of the military stations, sustained by the mere thirst of vengeance — vengeance against that mighty foe whom they knew only by his proclamations against themselves. Everything continued to prosper ; the conspirators met under the walls of Rome ; the final details were arranged ; and those also would have prospered but for a trifling accident. The season was one of general carnival at Rome ; and, by the help of those disguises which the license of this festal time allowed, the murderers were to have penetrated as maskers to the emperor's retirement, when a casual word or two awoke the suspicions of a sentinel. One of the conspirators was arrested ; under the terror and uncertainty of the moment he made much ampler discoveries than were expected of him ; the other accomplices were secured : and Commodus was delivered from the uplifted daggers of those who had sought him by months of patient wanderings, pursued through all the depths of the Illyrian forests, and the difficulties of the Alpine passes. It is not easy to find words commensurate to the energetic hardihood of a slave — who, by way of answer and reprisal to an edict which consigned him to persecution and death, determines to cross Europe in quest of its author, though no less a

person than the master of the world — to seek him out in the inner recesses of his capital city and his private palace — and there to lodge a dagger in his heart, as the adequate reply to the imperial sentence of proscription against himself.

Such, amidst his superhuman grandeur and consecrated powers of the Roman emperor's office, were the extraordinary perils which menaced the individual, and the peculiar frailties of his condition. Nor is it possible that these circumstances of violent opposition can be better illustrated than in this tale of Herodias. Whilst the emperor's mighty arms were stretched out to arrest some potentate in the heart of Asia, a poor slave is silently and stealthily creeping round the base of the Alps, with the purpose of winning his way as a murderer to the imperial bedchamber; Cæsar is watching some mighty rebel of the Orient, at a distance of two thousand leagues, and he overlooks the dagger which is at his own heart. In short, all the heights and the depths which belong to man as aspirers, all the contrasts of glory and meanness, the extremities of what is highest and lowest in human possibility, — all met in the situation of the Roman Cæsars, and have combined to make them the most interesting studies which history has furnished.

This, as a general proposition, will be readily admitted. But meantime, it is remarkable that no field has been less trodden than the private memorials o.

those very Cæsars; whilst at the same time it is equally remarkable, in concurrence with that subject for wonder, that precisely with the first of the Cæsars commences the first page of what in modern times we understand by anecdotes. Suetonius is the earliest writer in that department of biography; so far as we know, he may be held first to have devised it as a mode of history. The six writers, whose sketches are collected under the general title of the *Augustan History*, followed in the same track. Though full of entertainment, and of the most curious researches, they are all of them entirely unknown, except to a few elaborate scholars. We purpose to collect from these obscure but most interesting memorialists, a few sketches and biographical portraits of these great princes, whose public life is sometimes known, but very rarely any part of their private and personal history. We must, of course, commence with the mighty founder of the Cæsars. In his case we cannot expect so much of absolute novelty as in that of those who succeed. But if, in this first instance, we are forced to touch a little upon old things, we shall confine ourselves as much as possible to those which are susceptible of new aspects. For the whole gallery of those who follow, we can undertake that the memorials which we shall bring forward may be looked upon as belonging pretty much to what has hitherto been a sealed book.

CHAPTER I.

THE character of the first Cæsar has perhaps never been worse appreciated than by him who in one sense described it best—that is, with most force and eloquence wherever he really *did* comprehend it. This was Lucan, who has nowhere exhibited more brilliant rhetoric, nor wandered more from the truth, than in the contrasted portraits of Cæsar and Pompey. The famous line, ‘*Nil actum reputans si quid superesset agendum,*’ is a fine feature of the real character, finely expressed. But if it had been Lucan’s purpose (as possibly, with a view to Pompey’s benefit, in some respects it was) utterly and extravagantly to falsify the character of the great Dictator, by no single trait could he more effectually have fulfilled that purpose, nor in fewer words, than by this expressive passage, ‘*Gaudensque viam fecisse ruinâ.*’ Such a trait would be almost extravagant applied even to Marius, who (though in many respects a perfect model of Roman grandeur, massy, columnar, imperturbable, and more perhaps than any one man recorded in history capable of justifying the bold illustration of that character in Horace, ‘*Si fractus illabatur orbis, impavidum ferient*

(*vinæ*,) had, however, a ferocity in his character, and a touch of the devil in him, very rarely united with the same tranquil intrepidity. But for Cæsar, the accomplished statesman, the splendid orator, the man of elegant habits and polished taste, the patron of the fine arts in a degree transcending all examples of his own or the previous age, and as a man of general literature so much beyond his contemporaries, except Cicero, that he looked down even upon the brilliant Sylla as an illiterate person,—to class such a man with the race of furious destroyers exulting in the desolations they spread, is to err not by an individual trait, but by the whole genus. The Attilas and the Tamerlanes, who rejoice in avowing themselves the scourges of God, and the special instruments of his wrath, have no one feature of affinity to the polished and humane Cæsar, and would as little have comprehended his character, as he could have respected theirs. Even Cato, the unworthy hero of Lucan, might have suggested to him a little more truth in this instance, by a celebrated remark which he made on the characteristic distinction of Cæsar, in comparison with other revolutionary disturbers; for, whereas others had attempted the overthrow of the state in a continued paroxysm of fury, and in a state of mind resembling the lunacy of intoxication, that Cæsar, on the contrary, among that whole class of civil disturbers, was the only one who had come to the task in a temper of sobriety

and moderation, (*unum accessisse sobrium ad rem publicam delendam.*)

In reality, Lucan did not think as he wrote. He had a purpose to serve; and in an age when to act like a freeman was no longer possible, he determined at least to write in that character. It is probable, also, that he wrote with a vindictive or malicious feeling towards Nero; and, as the single means he had for gratifying *that*, resolved upon sacrificing the grandeur of Cæsar's character wherever it should be found possible. Meantime, in spite of himself, Lucan for ever betrays his lurking consciousness of the truth. Nor are there any testimonies to Cæsar's vast superiority more memorably pointed, than those which are indirectly and involuntarily extorted from this Catonic poet, by the course of his narration. Never, for example, was there within the same compass of words, a more emphatic expression of Cæsar's essential and inseparable grandeur of thought, which could not be disguised or be laid aside for an instant, than is found in the three casual words — *Indocilis privata loqui*. The very mould, it seems, by Lucan's confession, of his trivial conversation was regal; nor could he, even to serve a purpose, abjure it for so much as a casual purpose. The acts of Cæsar speak also the same language; and as these are less susceptible of a false coloring than the features of a general character, we find this poet of liberty, in the midst of one continu-

ous effort to distort the truth, and to dress up two
scenical heroes, forced by the mere necessities of his-
tory into a reluctant homage to Cæsar's supremacy of
moral grandeur.

Of so great a man it must be interesting to know
all the well attested opinions which bear upon topics
of universal interest to human nature: as indeed no
others stood much chance of preservation, unless it
were from as minute and curious a collector of *anec-
dotage* as Suetonius. And, first, it would be gratifying
to know the opinion of Cæsar, if he had any peculiar
to himself, on the great theme of Religion. It has
been held, indeed, that the constitution of his mind,
and the general cast of his character, indisposed him
to religious thoughts. Nay, it has been common to
class him amongst deliberate atheists; and some well
known anecdotes are current in books, which illustrate
his contempt for the vulgar class of auguries. In this,
however, he went no farther than Cicero, and other
great contemporaries, who assuredly were no atheists.
One mark perhaps of the wide interval which, in
Cæsar's age, had begun to separate the Roman nobility
from the hungry and venal populace who were daily
put up to sale, and bought by the highest bidder,
manifested itself in the increasing disdain for the
tastes and ruling sympathies of the lowest vulgar.
No mob could be more abjectly servile than was that
of Rome to the superstition of portents, prodigies, and

omens. Thus far, in common with his order, and in this sense, Julius Cæsar was naturally a despiser of superstition. Mere strength of understanding would, perhaps, have made him so in any age, and apart from the circumstances of his personal history. This natural tendency in him would doubtless receive a further bias in the same direction from the office of Pontifex Maximus, which he held at an early stage of his public career. This office, by letting him too much behind the curtain, and exposing too entirely the base machinery of ropes and pulleys, which sustained the miserable jugglery played off upon the popular credulity, impressed him perhaps even unduly with contempt for those who *could* be its dupes. And we may add, that Cæsar was constitutionally, as well as by accident of position, too much a man of the world, had too powerful a leaning to the virtues of *active* life, was governed by too partial a sympathy with the whole class of *active* forces in human nature, as contradistinguished from those which tend to contemplative purposes, under any circumstances, to have become a profound believer, or a steadfast reposer of his fears and anxieties, in religious influences. A man of the world is but another designation for a man indisposed to religious awe or contemplative enthusiasm. Still it is a doctrine which we cherish—that grandeur of mind in any one department whatsoever, supposing only that it exists in excess, disposes a man

to some degree of sympathy with all other grandeur, however alien in its quality or different in its form. And upon this ground we presume the great Dictator to have had an interest in religious themes by mere compulsion of his own extraordinary elevation of mind, after making the fullest allowance for the special quality of that mind, which did certainly, to the whole extent of its characteristics, tend entirely to estrange him from such themes. We find, accordingly, that though sincerely a despiser of superstition, and with a frankness which must sometimes have been hazardous in that age, Cæsar was himself also superstitious. No man could have been otherwise who lived and conversed with that generation of people. But if superstitious, he was so after a mode of his own. In his very infirmities Cæsar manifested his greatness: his very littlenesses were noble.

‘*Nec licuit populis parvum te, Nile, videre.*’

That he placed some confidence in dreams, for instance, is certain: because, had he slighted them unreservedly, he would not have dwelt upon them afterwards, or have troubled himself to recall their circumstances. Here we trace his human weakness. Yet again we are reminded that it was the weakness of Cæsar; for the dreams were noble in their imagery, and Cæsarean (so to speak) in their tone of moral feeling. Thus, for example, the night before he was assassinated, he dreamt at intervals that he was soar-

in; ab ve the clouds on wings, and that he placed his
hand within the right hand of Jove. It would seem
that perhaps some obscure and half-formed image
floated in his mind, of the eagle, as the king of birds;
secondly, as the tutelary emblem under which his
conquering legions had so often obeyed his voice; and,
thirdly, as the bird of Jove. To this triple relation of
the bird his dream covertly appears to point. And a
singular coincidence appears between this dream and
a little anecdote brought down to us, as having ac-
tually occurred in Rome about twenty-four hours
before his death. A little bird, which by some is rep-
resented as a very small kind of sparrow, but which,
both to the Greeks and the Romans, was known by a
name implying a regal station (probably from the am-
bitious courage which at times prompted it to attack
the eagle), was observed to direct its flight towards
the senate-house, consecrated by Pompey, whilst a
crowd of other birds were seen to hang upon its flight
in close pursuit. What might be the object of the
chase, whether the little king himself, or a sprig of
laurel which he bore in his mouth, could not be deter-
mined. The whole train, pursuers and pursued, con-
tinued their flight towards Pompey's hall. Flight
and pursuit were there alike arrested; the little king
was overtaken by his enemies, who fell upon him
~~as~~ so many co[n]spirators, and tore him limb from
limb.

If this anecdote were reported to Cæsar, which is not at all improbable, considering the earnestness with which his friends labored to dissuade him from his purpose of meeting the senate on the approaching Ides of March, it is very little to be doubted that it had a considerable effect upon his feelings, and that, in fact, his own dream grew out of the impression which it had made. This way of linking the two anecdotes as cause and effect, would also bring a third anecdote under the same *nexus*. We are told that Calpurnia, the last wife of Cæsar, dreamed on the same night, and to the same ominous result. The circumstances of *her* dream are less striking, because less figurative; but on that account its import was less open to doubt: she dreamed, in fact, that after the roof of their mansion had fallen in, her husband was stabbed in her bosom. Laying all these omens together, Cæsar would have been more or less than human had he continued utterly undepressed by them. And if so much superstition as even this implies, must be taken to argue some little weakness, on the other hand let it not be forgotten, that this very weakness does but the more illustrate the unusual force of mind, and the heroic will, which obstinately laid aside these *concurring* prefigurations of impending destruction; concurring, we say, amongst themselves—and concurring also with a prophecy of older date, which was totally independent of them all.

There is another and somewhat sublime story of the same class, which belongs to the most interesting moment of Cæsar's life; and those who are disposed to explain all such tales upon physiological principles, will find an easy solution of this, in particular, in the exhaustion of body, and the intense anxiety which must have debilitated even Cæsar under the whole circumstances of the case. On the ever memorable night, when he had resolved to take the first step (and in such a case the first step, as regarded the power of retreating, was also the final step) which placed him in arms against the state, it happened that his headquarters were at some distance from the little river Rubicon, which formed the boundary of his province. With his usual caution, that no news of his motions might run before himself, on this night Cæsar gave an entertainment to his friends, in the midst of which he slipped away unobserved, and with a small retinue proceeded through the woods to the point of the river at which he designed to cross. The night⁸ was stormy, and by the violence of the wind all the torches of his escort were blown out, so that the whole party lost their road, having probably at first intentionally deviated from the main route, and wandered about through the whole night, until the early dawn enabled them to recover their true course. The light was still gray and uncertain, as Cæsar and his retinue rode down upon the banks of the fatal river — to cross which with arms

in his hands, since the further bank lay within the territory of the Republic, *ipso facto*, proclaimed any Roman a rebel and a traitor. No man, the firmest or the most obtuse, could be otherwise than deeply agitated, when looking down upon this little brook — so insignificant in itself, but invested by law with a sanctity so awful, and so dire a consecration. The whole course of future history, and the fate of every nation, would necessarily be determined by the irretrievable act of the next half hour.

In these moments, and with this spectacle before him, and contemplating these immeasurable consequences consciously for the last time that could allow him a retreat, — impressed also by the solemnity and deep tranquillity of the silent dawn, whilst the exhaustion of his night wanderings predisposed him to nervous irritation, — Cæsar, we may be sure, was profoundly agitated. The whole elements of the scene were almost scenically disposed; the law of antagonism having perhaps never been employed with so much effect: the little quiet brook presenting a direct antithesis to its grand political character; and the innocent dawn, with its pure, untroubled repose, contrasting potently, to a man of any intellectual sensibility, with the long chaos of bloodshed, darkness and anarchy, which was to take its rise from the apparently trifling acts of this one morning. So prepared, we need not much wonder at what followed

Cæsar was yet lingering on the hither bank, when suddenly, at a point not far distant from himself, an apparition was descried in a sitting posture, and holding in its hand what seemed a flute. This phantom was of unusual size, and of beauty more than human, so far as its lineaments could be traced in the early dawn. What is singular, however, in the story, on any hypothesis which would explain it out of Cæsar's individual condition, is, that others saw it as well as he; both pastoral laborers, (who were present, probably in the character of guides,) and some of the sentinels stationed at the passage of the river. These men fancied even that a strain of music issued from this aerial flute. And some, both of the shepherds and the Roman soldiers, who were bolder than the rest, advanced towards the figure. Amongst this party, it happened that there were a few Roman trumpeters. From one of these, the phantom, rising as they advanced nearer, suddenly caught a trumpet, and blowing through it a blast of superhuman strength, plunged into the Rubicon, passed to the other bank, and disappeared in the dusky twilight of the dawn. Upon which Cæsar exclaimed: — It is finished — the die is cast — let us follow whither the guiding portents from Heaven, and the malice of our enemy, alike summon us to go.' So saying, he crossed the river with impetuosity; and, in a sudden rapture of passionate and vindictive ambition, placed himself and his retinue

upon the Italian soil ; and, as if by inspiration from Heaven, in one moment involved himself and his followers in treason, raised the standard of revolt, put his foot upon the neck of the invincible republic which had humbled all the kings of the earth, and founded an empire which was to last for a thousand and half a thousand years. In what manner this spectral appearance was managed — whether Cæsar were its author, or its dupe — will remain unknown for ever. But undoubtedly this was the first time that the advanced guard of a victorious army was headed by an apparition ; and we may conjecture that it will be the last.⁹

In the mingled yarn of human life, tragedy is never far asunder from farce ; and it is amusing to retrace in immediate succession to this incident of epic dignity, which has its only parallel by the way in the case of Vasco de Gama, (according to the narrative of Camoens,) when met and confronted by a sea phantom whilst attempting to double the Cape of Storms, (Cape of Good Hope,) a ludicrous passage, in which one felicitous blunder did Cæsar a better service than all the truths which Greece and Rome could have furnished. In our own experience, we once witnessed a blunder about as gross. The present Chancellor, in his first electioneering contest with the Lowthers, upon some occasion where he was recriminating upon the other party, and complaining that stratagems, which

they might practise with impunity, were denied to him and his, happened to point the moral of his complaint, by alleging the old adage, that one man might steal a horse with more hope of indulgence than another could look over the hedge. Whereupon, by benefit of the universal mis-hearing in the outermost ring of the audience, it became generally reported that Lord Lowther had once been engaged in an affair of horse stealing; and that he, Henry Brougham, could (had he pleased) have lodged an information against him, seeing that he was then looking over the hedge. And this charge naturally won the more credit, because it was notorious and past denying that his lordship was a capital horseman, fond of horses, and much connected with the turf. To this hour, therefore, amongst some worthy shepherds and others, it is a received article of their creed, and (as they justly observe in northern pronunciation) a *shamful* thing to be told, that Lord Lowther was once a horse stealer, and that he escaped *lagging* by reason of Harry Brougham's pity for his tender years and hopeful looks. Not less was the blunder, which, on the banks of the Rubicon, befriended Cæsar. Immediately after crossing, he harangued the troops whom he had sent forward, and others who there met him from the neighboring garrison of Ariminium. The tribunes of the people, those great officers of the democracy, corresponding by some of their functions,

to our House of Commons, men personally, and by their position in the state, entirely in his interest, and who, for his sake, had fled from home, there and then he produced to the soldiery ; thus identified his cause, and that of the soldiers, with the cause of the people of Rome and of Roman liberty ; and perhaps with needless rhetoric attempted to conciliate those who were by a thousand ties and by claims innumerable, his own already ; for never yet has it been found, that with the soldier, who, from youth upwards, passes his life in camps, could the duties or the interests of citizens survive those stronger and more personal relations connecting him with his military superior. In the course of this harangue, Cæsar often raised his left hand with Demosthenic action, and once or twice he drew off the ring, which every Roman gentleman — simply *as such* — wore as the inseparable adjunct and symbol of his rank. By this action he wished to give emphasis to the accompanying words, in which he protested, that, sooner than fail in satisfying and doing justice to any the least of those who heard him and followed his fortunes, he would be content to part with his own birthright, and to forego his dearest claims. This was what he really said ; but the outermost circles of his auditors, who rather saw his gestures than distinctly heard his words, carried off the notion, which they were careful everywhere to disperse

amongst the legions afterwards associated with them in the same camps,) that Cæsar had vowed never to lay down his arms until he had obtained for every man, the very meanest of those who heard him, the rank, privileges and appointments of a Roman knight. Here was a piece of sovereign good luck. Had he really made such a promise, Cæsar might have found that he had laid himself under very embarrassing obligations; but, as the case stood, he had, through all his following campaigns, the total benefit of such a promise, and yet could always absolve himself from the penalties of responsibility which it imposed, by appealing to the evidence of those who happened to stand in the first ranks of his audience. The blunder was gross and palpable; and yet, with the unreflecting and dull-witted soldier, it did him service greater than all the subtleties of all the schools could have accomplished, and a service which subsisted to the end of the war.

Great as Cæsar was by the benefit of his original nature, there can be no doubt that he, like others, owed something to circumstances; and, perhaps, amongst those which were most favorable to the premature development of great self-dependence, we must reckon the early death of his father. It is, or t is not, according to the nature of men, an advantage to be orphaned at an early age. Perhaps utter orphanage is rarely or never such: but to lose a father

sometimes profits a strong mind greatly. To Cæsar it was a prodigious benefit that he lost his father when not much more than fifteen. Perhaps it was an advantage also to his father that he died thus early. Had he stayed a year longer, he would have seen himself despised, baffled, and made ridiculous. For where, let us ask, in any age, was the father capable of adequately sustaining that relation to the unique Caius Julius — to him, in the appropriate language of Shakspeare,

‘The foremost man of all this world?’

And, in this fine and Cæsarean line, ‘this world’ is to be understood not of the order of co-existences merely, but also of the order of successions; he was the foremost man not only of his contemporaries, but also of men generally — of all that ever should come after him, or should sit on thrones under the denominations of Czars, Kesars, or Cæsars of the Bosphorus and the Danube; of all in every age that should inherit his supremacy of mind, or should subject to themselves the generations of ordinary men by qualities analogous to his. Of this infinite superiority some part must be ascribed to his early emancipation from paternal control. There are very many cases in which, simply from considerations of sex, a female cannot stand forward as the head of a family, or as its suitable representative. If there are even ladies paramount, and in situations of command, they are also

women. The staff of authority does not annihilate their sex; and scruples of female delicacy interfere for ever to unnerve and emasculate in their hands the sceptre however otherwise potent. Hence we see, in noble families, the merest boys put forward to represent the family dignity, as fitter supporters of that burden than their mature mothers. And of Cæsar's mother, though little is recorded, and that little incidentally, this much, at least, we learn — that, if she looked down upon him with maternal pride and delight, she looked up to him with female ambition as the re-edifier of her husband's honors, with reverence as to a column of the Roman grandeur, and with fear and feminine anxieties as to one whose aspiring spirit carried him but too prematurely into the fields of adventurous honor. One slight and evanescent sketch of the relations which subsisted between Cæsar and his mother, caught from the wrecks of time, is preserved both by Plutarch and Suetonius. We see in the early dawn the young patrician standing upon the steps of his paternal portico, his mother with her arms wreathed about his neck, looking up to his noble countenance, sometimes drawing auguries of hope from features so fitted for command, sometimes boding an early blight to promises so prematurely magnificent. That she had something of her son's aspiring character, or that he presumed so much in a mother of his, we learn from the few words which survive o.

their conversation. He addressed to her no language that could tranquillize her fears. On the contrary, to any but a Roman mother his valedictory words, taken in connection with the known determination of his character, were of a nature to consummate her depression, as they tended to confirm the very worst of her fears. He was then going to stand his chance in a popular election for an office of dignity, and to launch himself upon the storms of the Campus Martius. At that period, besides other and more ordinary dangers, the bands of gladiators, kept in the pay of the more ambitious amongst the Roman nobles, gave a popular tone of ferocity and of personal risk to the course of such contests ; and either to forestall the victory of an antagonist, or to avenge their own defeat, it was not at all impossible that a body of incensed competitors might intercept his final triumph by assassination. For this danger, however, he had no leisure in his thoughts of consolation ; the sole danger which *he* contemplated, or supposed his mother to contemplate, was the danger of defeat, and for that he reserved his consolations. He bade her fear nothing ; for that without doubt he would return with victory, and with the ensigns of the dignity he sought, or would return a corpse.

Early, indeed, did Cæsar's trials commence ; and it is probable, that, had not the death of his father, by throwing him prematurely upon his own resources,

prematurely developed the masculine features of his character, forcing him whilst yet a boy under the discipline of civil conflict and the yoke of practical life, even *his* energies would have been insufficient to sustain them. His age is not exactly ascertained, but it is past a doubt that he had not reached his twentieth year when he had the hardihood to engage in a struggle with Sylla, then Dictator, and exercising the immoderate powers of that office with the license and the severity which history has made so memorable. He had neither any distinct grounds of hope, nor any eminent example at that time, to countenance him in this struggle — which yet he pushed on in the most uncompromising style, and to the utmost verge of defiance. The subject of the contrast gives it a further interest. It was the youthful wife of the youthful Cæsar who stood under the shadow of the great Dictator's displeasure; not personally, but politically, on account of her connections; and her it was, Cornelia, the daughter of a man who had been four times consul, that Cæsar was required to divorce; but he spurned the haughty mandate, and carried his determination to a triumphant issue, notwithstanding his life was at stake, and at one time saved only by shifting his place of concealment every night; and this young lady it was who afterwards became the mother of his only daughter. Both mother and daughter, it is remarkable, perished prematurely, and

at critical periods of Cæsar's life ; for it is probable enough that these irreparable wounds to Cæsar's domestic affections threw him with more exclusiveness of devotion upon the fascinations of glory and ambition than might have happened under a happier condition of his private life. That Cæsar should have escaped destruction in this unequal contest with an enemy then wielding the whole thunders of the state, is somewhat surprising ; and historians have sought their solution of the mystery in the powerful intercessions of the vestal virgins, and several others of high rank amongst the connections of his great house. These may have done something ; but it is due to Sylla, who had a sympathy with everything truly noble, to suppose him struck with powerful admiration for the audacity of the young patrician, standing out in such severe solitude among so many examples of timid concession ; and that to this magnanimous feeling in the Dictator, much of his indulgence was due. In fact, according to some accounts, it was not Sylla, but the creatures of Sylla (*adjutores*), who pursued Cæsar. We know, at all events, that Sylla formed a right estimate of Cæsar's character, and that, from the complexion of his conduct in this one instance, he drew his famous prophecy of his future destiny ; bidding his friends beware of that slipshod boy, 'for that in him lay touchant many a Marius.' A grander testimony to the awe which Cæsar inspired, or from one who knew

better the qualities of that man by whom he measured him, cannot be imagined.

It is not our intention, or consistent with our plan, to pursue this great man through the whole circumstances of his romantic career; though it is certain that many parts of his life require investigation much keener than has ever been applied to them, and that many might easily be placed in a new light. Indeed, the whole of this most momentous section of ancient history ought to be recomposed with the critical scepticism of a Niebuhr, and the same comprehensive collation of authorities. In reality it is the hinge upon which turned the future destiny of the whole earth; and having therefore a common relation to all modern nations whatsoever, should naturally have been cultivated with the zeal which belongs to a personal concern. In general, the anecdotes which express most vividly the splendid character of the first Cæsar, are those which illustrate his defiance of danger in extremity; the prodigious energy and rapidity of his decisions and motions in the field; the skill with which he penetrated the designs of his enemies, and the exemplary speed with which he provided a remedy for disasters; the extraordinary presence of mind which he showed in turning adverse omens to his own advantage, as when, upon stumbling in coming on shore, (which was esteemed a capital omen of evil,) he transfigured as it were in one instant its whol-

meaning by exclaiming, ‘Thus do I take possession of thee, oh Africa!’ in that way giving to an accident the semblance of a symbolic purpose; the grandeur of fortitude with which he faced the whole extent of a calamity when palliation could do no good, ‘non negando, minuendove, sed insuper amplificando, *ementiendoque*;’ as when, upon finding his soldiery alarmed at the approach of Juba, with forces really great, but exaggerated by their terrors, he addressed them in a military harangue to the following effect: ‘Know that within a few days the king will come up with us, bringing with him sixty thousand legionaries, thirty thousand cavalry, one hundred thousand light troops, besides three hundred elephants. Such being the case, let me hear no more of conjectures and opinions, for you have now my warrant for the fact, whose information is past doubting. Therefore, be satisfied; otherwise, I will put every man of you on board some crazy old fleet, and whistle you down the tide—no matter under what winds, no matter towards what shore.’ Finally, we might seek for the *characteristic* anecdotes of Cæsar in his unexampled liberalities and contempt of money.¹⁰

Upon this last topic it is the just remark of Casaubon, that some instances of Cæsar’s munificence have been thought apocryphal, or to rest upon false readings, simply from ignorance of the heroic scale upon which the Roman splendors of that age pro-

seeded. A forum which Cæsar built out of the products of his last campaign, by way of a present to the Roman people, cost him — for the ground merely on which it stood — nearly eight hundred thousand pounds. To the *citizens* of Rome (perhaps 300,000 persons) he presented, in one *congiary*, about two guineas and a half a head. To his army, in one *donation*, upon the termination of the civil war, he gave a sum which allowed about two hundred pounds a man to the infantry, and four hundred to the cavalry. It is true that the legionary troops were then much reduced by the sword of the enemy, and by the tremendous hardships of their last campaigns. In this, however, he did perhaps no more than repay a debt. For it is an instance of military attachment, beyond all that Wallenstein or any commander, the most beloved amongst his troops, has ever experienced, that, on the breaking out of the civil war, not only did the centurions of every legion severally maintain a horse soldier, but even the privates volunteered to serve without pay — and (what might seem impossible) without their daily rations. This was accomplished by subscriptions amongst themselves, the more opulent undertaking for the maintenance of the needy. Their disinterested love for Cæsar appeared in another and more difficult illustration ; it was a traditional anecdote in Rome, that the majority of those amongst Cæsar's troops, who had the misfortune to fall into the

meny's hands, refused to accept their lives under the condition of serving against him.

In connection with this subject of his extraordinary munificence, there is one aspect of Cæsar's life which has suffered much from the misrepresentations of historians, and that is — the vast pecuniary embarrassments under which he labored, until the profits of war had turned the scale even more prodigiously in his favor. At one time of his life, when appointed to a foreign office, so numerous and so clamorous were his creditors, that he could not have left Rome on his public duties, had not Crassus come forward with assistance in money, or by promises, to the amount of nearly two hundred thousand pounds. And at another, he was accustomed to amuse himself with computing how much money it would require to make him worth exactly nothing (*i. e.* simply to clear him of debts); this, by one account, amounted to upwards of two millions sterling. Now the error of historians has been — to represent these debts as the original ground of his ambition and his revolutionary projects, as though the desperate condition of his private affairs had suggested a civil war to his calculations as the best or only mode of redressing it. But, on the contrary, his debts were the product of his ambition, and contracted from first to last in the service of his political intrigues, for raising and maintaining a powerful body of partisans, both in Rome and elsewhere. Whosoever

indeed, will take the trouble to investigate the progress of Cæsar's ambition, from such materials as even yet remain, may satisfy himself that the scheme of revolutionizing the Republic, and placing himself at its head, was no growth of accident or circumstances ; above all, that it did not arise upon any so petty and indirect an occasion as that of his debts ; but that his debts were in their very first origin purely ministerial to his ambition ; and that his revolutionary plans were at all periods of his life a direct and foremost object. In this there was in reality no want of patriotism ; it had become evident to every-body that Rome, under its present constitution, must fall ; and the sole question was — by whom ? Even Pompey, not by nature of an aspiring turn, and prompted to his ambitious course undoubtedly by circumstances and the friends who besieged him, was in the habit of saying, ‘ Sylla potuit, ego non potero ? ’ And the fact was, that if, from the death of Sylla, Rome recovered some transient show of constitutional integrity, that happened not by any lingering virtue that remained in her republican forms, but entirely through the equilibrium and mechanical counterpoise of rival factions. In a case, therefore, where no benefit of choice was allowed to Rome as to the thing, but only as to the person — where a revolution was certain, and the point left open to doubt simply by whom that revolution should be accomplished — Cæsar had (to say the least

the same right to enter the arena in the character of candidate as could belong to any one of his rivals. And that he *did* enter that arena constructively, and by secret design, from his very earliest manhood, may be gathered from this — that he suffered no openings towards a revolution, provided they had any hope in them, to escape his participation. It is familiarly known that he was engaged pretty deeply in the conspiracy of Catiline,¹¹ and that he incurred considerable risk on that occasion ; but it is less known, and has indeed escaped the notice of historians generally, that he was a party to at least two other conspiracies. There was even a fourth meditated by Crassus, which Cæsar so far encouraged as to undertake a journey to Rome from a very distant quarter, merely with a view to such chances as it might offer to him ; but as it did not, upon examination, seem to him a very promising scheme, he judged it best to look coldly upon it, or not to embark in it by any personal co-operation. Upon these and other facts we build our inference — that the scheme of a revolution was the one great purpose of Cæsar, from his first entrance upon public life. Nor does it appear that he cared much by whom it was undertaken, provided only there seemed to be any sufficient resources for carrying it through, and for sustaining the first collision with the regular forces of the existing government. He relied, it seems, on his own personal superiority for raising him to the head of

affairs eventually, let who would take the nominal lead at first. To the same result, it will be found, tended the vast stream of Cæsar's liberalities. From the senator downwards to the lowest *fæx Romuli*, he had a hired body of dependents, both in and out of Rome, equal in numbers to a nation. In the provinces, and in distant kingdoms, he pursued the same schemes. Everywhere he had a body of mercenary partisans; kings are known to have taken his pay. And it is remarkable that even in his character of commander-in-chief, where the number of legions allowed to him for the accomplishment of his mission raised him for a number of years above all fear of coercion or control, he persevered steadily in the same plan of providing for the day when he might need assistance, not *from* the state, but *against* the state. For amongst the private anecdotes which came to light under the researches made into his history after his death, was this — that, soon after his first entrance upon his government in Gaul, he had raised, equipped, disciplined, and maintained from his own private funds, a legion amounting, perhaps, to six or seven thousand men, who were bound by no sacrament of military obedience to the state, nor owed fealty to any auspices except those of Cæsar. This legion, from the fashion of their crested helmets, which resembled the crested heads of a small bird of the lark species, received the popular name of the *Alauda* (or Lark) legion. And very sin-

gular it was that Cato, or Marcellus, or some amongst those enemies of Cæsar, who watched his conduct during the period of his Gaulish command with the vigilance of rancorous malice, should not have come to the knowledge of this fact ; in which case we may be sure that it would have been denounced to the senate.

Such, then, for its purpose and its uniform motive, was the sagacious munificence of Cæsar. Apart from this motive, and considered in and for itself, and simply with a reference to the splendid forms which it often assumed, this munificence would furnish the materials for a volume. The public entertainments of Cæsar, his spectacles and shows, his naumachiæ, and the pomps of his unrivalled triumphs, (the closing triumphs of the Republic,) were severally the finest of their kind which had then been brought forward. Sea-fights were exhibited upon the grandest scale, according to every known variety of nautical equipment and mode of conflict, upon a vast lake formed artificially for that express purpose. Mimic land-fights were conducted, in which all the circumstances of real war were so faithfully rehearsed, that even elephants ‘ endorsed with towers,’ twenty on each side, took part in the combat. Dramas were represented in every known language, (*per omnium linguarum histriones.*) And hence [that is, from the conciliatory feeling thus expressed towards the various tribes of foreigners resident in Rome] some have derived an explanation of

what is else a mysterious circumstance amongst the ceremonial observances at Cæsar's funeral — that all people of foreign nations then residing at Rome, distinguished themselves by the conspicuous share which they took in the public mourning; and that, beyond all other foreigners, the Jews for night after night kept watch and ward about the emperor's grave. Never before, according to traditions which lasted through several generations in Rome, had there been so vast a conflux of the human race congregated to any one centre, on any one attraction of business or of pleasure, as to Rome on occasion of these spectacles exhibited by Cæsar.

In our days, the greatest occasional gatherings of the human race are in India, especially at the great fair of the *Hurdwar*, in the northern part of Hindostan ; a confluence of many millions is sometimes seen at that spot, brought together under the mixed influences of devotion and commercial business, and dispersed as rapidly as they had been convoked. Some such spectacle of nations crowding upon nations, and some such Babylonian confusion of dresses, complexions, languages, and jargons, was then witnessed at Rome. Accommodations within doors, and under roofs of houses, or of temples, was altogether impossible. Myriads encamped along the streets, and along the high-roads in the vicinity of Rome. Myriads of myriads lay stretched on the ground, without even the

slight protection of tents, in a vast circuit about the city. Multitudes of men, even senators, and others of the highest rank, were trampled to death in the crowds. And the whole family of man seemed at that time gathered together at the bidding of the great Dictator. But these, or any other themes connected with the public life of Cæsar, we notice only in those circumstances which have been overlooked, or partially represented by historians. Let us now, in conclusion, bring forward, from the obscurity in which they have hitherto lurked, the anecdotes which describe the habits of his private life, his tastes, and personal peculiarities.

In person, he was tall,¹² fair, and of limbs distinguished for their elegant proportions and gracility. His eyes were black and piercing. These circumstances continued to be long remembered, and no doubt were constantly recalled to the eyes of all persons in the imperial palaces, by pictures, busts, and statues; for we find the same description of his personal appearance three centuries afterwards, in a work of the Emperor Julian's. He was a most accomplished horseman, and a master (*peritissimus*) in the use of arms. But notwithstanding his skill and horsemanship, it seems that, when he accompanied his army on marches, he walked oftener than he rode; no doubt, with a view to the benefit of his example, and to express that sympathy with his soldiers which gained

him their hearts so entirely. On other occasions when travelling apart from his army, he seems more frequently to have rode in a carriage than on horseback. His purpose, in making this preference, must have been with a view to the transport of luggage. The carriage which he generally used was a *rheda*, a sort of gig, or rather curricle, for it was a four-wheeled carriage, and adapted (as we find from the imperial regulations for the public carriages, &c.) to the conveyance of about half a ton. The mere personal baggage which Cæsar carried with him, was probably considerable, for he was a man of the most elegant habits, and in all parts of his life sedulously attentive to elegance of personal appearance. The length of journeys which he accomplished within a given time, appears even to us at this day, and might well therefore appear to his contemporaries, truly astonishing. A distance of one hundred miles was no extraordinary day's journey for him in a *rheda*, such as we have described it. So elegant were his habits, and so constant his demand for the luxurious accommodations of polished life, as it then existed in Rome, that he is said to have carried with him, as indispensable parts of his personal baggage, the little lozenges and squares of ivory, and other costly materials, which were wanted for the tessellated flooring of his tent. Habits such as these will easily account for his travelling in a carriage rather than on horseback.

The courtesy and obliging disposition of Cæsar were notorious, and both were illustrated in some anecdotes which survived for generations in Rome. Dining on one occasion at a table, where the servants had inadvertently, for salad-oil furnished some sort of coarse lamp-oil, Cæsar would not allow the rest of the company to point out the mistake to their host, for fear of shocking him too much by exposing the mistake. At another time, whilst halting at a little *cabaret*, when one of his retinue was suddenly taken ill, Cæsar resigned to his use the sole bed which the house afforded. Incidents as trifling as these, express the urbanity of Cæsar's nature; and, hence, one is more surprised to find the alienation of the senate charged, in no trifling degree, upon a failure in point of courtesy. Cæsar neglected to rise from his seat on their approaching him in a body with an address of congratulation. It is said, and we can believe it, that he gave deeper offence by this one defect in a matter of ceremonial observance, than by all his substantial attacks upon their privileges. What we find it difficult to believe, however, is not that result from the offence, but the possibility of the offence itself, from one so little arrogant as Cæsar, and so entirely a man of the world. He was told of the disgust which he had given, and we are bound to believe his apology, in which he charged it upon sickness, which would not the moment allow him to maintain a standing atti-

tude. Certainly the whole tenor of his life was not courteous only, but kind ; and, to his enemies, merciful in a degree which implied so much more magnanimity than men in general could understand, that by many it was put down to the account of weakness.

Weakness, however, there was none in Caius Cæsar : and, that there might be none, it was fortunate that conspiracy should have cut him off in the full vigor of his faculties, in the very meridian of his glory, and on the brink of completing a series of gigantic achievements. Amongst these are numbered — a digest of the entire body of the laws, even then become unwieldy and oppressive ; the establishment of vast and comprehensive public libraries, Greek as well as Latin ; the chastisement of Dacia ; the conquest of Parthia ; and the cutting a ship canal through the Isthmus of Corinth. The reformation of the calendar he had already accomplished. And of all his projects it may be said that they were equally patriotic in their purpose, and colossal in their proportions.

As an orator, Cæsar's merit was so eminent, that, according to the general belief, had he found time to cultivate this department of civil exertion, the precise supremacy of Cicero would have been made questionable, or the honors would have been divided. Cicero himself was of that opinion ; and on different occasions applied the epithet *Splendidus* to Cæsar, as though in some exclusive sense, or with a peculiar emphasis, due

to him. His taste was much simpler, chaster, and disinclined to the *florid* and ornamental, than that of Cicero. So far he would, in that condition of the Roman culture and feeling, have been less acceptable to the public; but, on the other hand, he would have compensated this disadvantage by much more of natural and Demosthenic fervor.

In literature, the merits of Cæsar are familiar to most readers. Under the modest title of *Commentaries*, he meant to offer the records of his Gallic and British campaigns, simply as notes, or memoranda, afterwards to be worked up by regular historians; but, as Cicero observes, their merit was such in the eyes of the discerning, that all judicious writers shrank from the attempt to alter them. In another instance of his literary labors, he showed a very just sense of true dignity. Rightly conceiving that everything patriotic was dignified, and that to illustrate or polish his native language, was a service of real patriotism, he composed a work on the grammar and orthoepy of the Latin language. Cicero and himself were the only Romans of distinction in that age, who applied themselves with true patriotism to the task of purifying and ennobling their mother tongue. Both were aware of the transcendent quality of the Grecian literature; but that splendor did not depress their hopes of raising their own to something of the same level. As respected the natural wealth of the two languages, it was the

private opinion of Cicero, that the Latin had the advantage; and if Cæsar did not accompany him to that length, he yet felt that it was but the more necessary to draw forth any single advantage which it really had.¹³

Was Cæsar, upon the whole, the greatest of men? Dr. Beattie once observed, that if that question were left to be collected from the suffrages already expressed in books, and scattered throughout the literature of all nations, the scale would be found to have turned prodigiously in Cæsar's favor, as against any single competitor; and there is no doubt whatsoever, that even amongst his own countrymen, and his own contemporaries, the same verdict would have been returned, had it been collected upon the famous principle of Themistocles, that *he* should be reputed the first, whom the greatest number of rival voices had pronounced the second.

CHAPTER II.

THE situation of the Second Cæsar, at the crisis of the great Dictator's assassination, was so hazardous and delicate, as to confer interest upon a character not otherwise attractive. To many we know it was positively repulsive, and in the very highest degree. In particular, it is recorded of Sir William Jones, that he regarded this emperor with feelings of abhorrence *so personal* and deadly, as to refuse him his customary titular honors whenever he had occasion to mention him by name. Yet it was the whole Roman people that conferred upon him his title of *Augustus*. But Sir William, ascribing no force to the acts of a people who had sunk so low as to exult in their chains, and to decorate with honors the very instruments of their own vassalage, would not recognize this popular creation, and spoke of him always by his family name of Octavius. The flattery of the populace, by the way, must, in this instance, have been doubly acceptable to the emperor, first, for what it gave, and secondly, for what it concealed. Of his grand-uncle the first Cæsar, a tradition survives — that of all the distinctions created in his favor, either by the senate or the people, he put most value upon the laurel

crown which was voted to him after his last campaigns — a beautiful and conspicuous memorial to every eye of his great public acts, and at the same time an overshadowing veil of his one sole personal defect. This laurel diadem at once proclaimed his civic grandeur, and concealed his baldness, a defect which was more mortifying to a Roman than it would be to ourselves from the peculiar theory which then prevailed as to its probable origin. A gratitude of the same mixed quality must naturally have been felt by the Second Cæsar for his title of *Augustus*, which, whilst it illustrated his public character by the highest expression of majesty, set apart and sequestered to public functions, had also the agreeable effect of withdrawing from the general remembrance his obscure descent. For the Octavian house [*gens*] had in neither of its branches risen to any great splendor of civic distinction, and in his own, to little or none. The same titular decoration, therefore, so offensive to the celebrated Whig, was, in the eyes of Augustus, at once a trophy of public merit, a monument of public gratitude, and an effectual obliteration of his own natal obscurity.

But, if merely odious to men of Sir William's principles, to others the character of Augustus, in relation to the circumstances which surrounded him, was not without its appropriate interest. He was summoned in early youth, and without warning, to face a crisis

of tremendous hazard, being at the same time himself a man of no very great constitutional courage ; perhaps he was even a coward. And this we say without meaning to adopt as gospel truths all the party reproaches of Anthony. Certainly he was utterly unfurnished by nature with those endowments which *seemed* to be indispensable in a successor to the power of the great Dictator. But exactly in these deficiencies, and in certain accidents unfavorable to his ambition, lay his security. He had been adopted by his grand-uncle, Julius. That adoption made him, to all intents and purposes of law, the son¹⁴ of his great patron ; and doubtless, in a short time, this adoption would have been applied to more extensive uses, and as a station of vantage for introducing him to the public favor. From the inheritance of the Julian estates and family honors, he would have been trained to mount, as from a stepping-stone, to the inheritance of the Julian power and political station ; and the Roman people would have been familiarized to regard him in that character. But, luckily for himself, the finishing, or ceremonial acts, were yet wanting in this process — the political heirship was inchoate and imperfect. Tacitly understood, indeed, it was ; but had it been formally proposed and ratified, there cannot be a doubt that the young Octavius would have been pointed out to the vengeance of the patriots, and included in the scheme of the conspirators, as a fellow-victim with his

nominal father; and would have been cut off too suddenly to benefit by that re-action of popular feeling which saved the partisans of the Dictator, by separating the conspirators, and obliging them, without loss of time, to look to their own safety. It was by this fortunate accident that the young heir and adopted son of the first Cæsar not only escaped assassination, but was enabled to postpone indefinitely the final and military struggle for the vacant seat of empire, and in the meantime to maintain a coequal rank with the leaders in the state, by those arts and resources in which he was superior to his competitors. His place in the favor of Caius Julius was of power sufficient to give him a share in any triumvirate which could be formed; but, wanting the formality of a regular introduction to the people, and the ratification of their acceptance, that place was not sufficient to raise him permanently into the perilous and invidious station of absolute supremacy which he afterwards occupied. The *felicity* of Augustus was often vaunted by antiquity, (with whom success was not so much a test of merit as itself a merit of the highest quality,) and in no instance was this felicity more conspicuous than in the first act of his entrance upon the political scene. No doubt his friends and enemies alike thought of him, at the moment of Cæsar's assassination, as we now think of a young man heir-elect to some person of immense wealth, cut off by a sudden death before

he has had time to ratify a will in execution of his purposes. Yet in fact the case was far otherwise. Brought forward distinctly as the successor of Cæsar's power, had he even, by some favorable accident of absence from Rome, or otherwise, escaped being involved in that great man's fate, he would at all events have been thrown upon the instant necessity of defending his supreme station by arms. To have left it unasserted, when once solemnly created in his favor by a reversionary title, would have been deliberately to resign it. This would have been a confession of weakness liable to no disguise, and ruinous to any subsequent pretensions. Yet, without preparation of means, with no development of resources nor growth of circumstances, an appeal to arms would, in his case, have been of very doubtful issue. His true weapons, for a long period, were the arts of vigilance and dissimulation. Cultivating these, he was enabled to prepare for a contest which, undertaken prematurely, must have ruined him, and to raise himself to a station of even military preëminence to those who naturally, and by circumstances, were originally every way superior to himself.

The qualities in which he really excelled, the gifts of intrigue, patience, long suffering, dissimulation, and tortuous fraud, were thus brought into play, and allowed their full value. Such qualities had every chance of prevailing in the long run, against the noble

carelessness and the impetuosity of the passionate Anthony—and they *did* prevail. Always on the watch to lay hold of those opportunities which the generous negligence of his rival was but too frequently throwing in his way—unless by the sudden reverses of war and the accidents of battle, which as much as possible, and as long as possible, he declined—there could be little question in any man's mind, that eventually he would win his way to a solitary throne, by a policy so full of caution and subtlety. He was sure to risk nothing which could be had on easier terms; and nothing unless for a great overbalance of gain in prospect; to lose nothing which he had once gained; and in no case to miss an advantage, or sacrifice an opportunity, by any consideration of generosity. No modern insurance office but would have guaranteed an event depending upon the final success of Augustus, on terms far below those which they must in prudence have exacted from the fiery and adventurous Anthony. Each was an ideal in his own class. But Augustus, having finally triumphed, has met with more than justice from succeeding ages. Even Lord Bacon says, that, by comparison with Julius Cæsar, he was '*non tam impar quam dispar*,' surely a most extravagant encomium, applied to whomsoever. On the other hand, Anthony, amongst the most signal misfortunes of his life, might number it that Cicero, the great dispenser of immortality, is

whose hands (more perhaps than in any one man's of any age) were the vials of good and evil fame, should happen to have been his bitter and persevering enemy. It is, however, some balance to this, that Shakspeare had a just conception of the original grandeur which lay beneath that wild tempestuous nature presented by Anthony to the eye of the undiscriminating world. It is to the honor of Shakspeare that he should have been able to discern the true coloring of this most original character under the smoke and tarnish of antiquity. It is no less to the honor of the great triumvir, that a strength of coloring should survive in his character, capable of baffling the wrongs and ravages of time. Neither is it to be thought strange that a character should have been misunderstood and falsely appreciated for nearly two thousand years. It happens not uncommonly, especially amongst an unimaginative people, like the Romans, that the characters of men are ciphers and enigmas to their own age, and are first read and interpreted by a far distant posterity. Stars are supposed to exist, whose light has been travelling for many thousands of years without having yet reached our system; and the eyes are yet unborn upon which their earliest rays will fall. Men like Mark Anthony, with minds of chaotic composition — light conflicting with darkness, proportions of colossal grandeur disfigured by unsymmetrical arrangement, the angelic in close neighborhood with the brutal — are

first read in their true meaning by an age learned in the philosophy of the human heart. Of this philosophy the Romans had, by the necessities of education and domestic discipline, not less than by original constitution of mind, the very narrowest visual range. In no literature whatsoever are so few tolerable notices to be found of any great truths in Psychology. Nor could this have been otherwise amongst a people who tried everything by the standard of *social* value; never seeking for a canon of excellence, in man considered abstractedly in and for himself, and as having an independent value — but always and exclusively in man as a gregarious being, and designed for social uses and functions. Not man in his own peculiar nature, but man in his relations to other men, was the station from which the Roman speculators took up their philosophy of human nature. Tried by such standard, Mark Anthony would be found wanting. As a citizen, he was irretrievably licentious, and therefore there needed not the bitter personal feud, which circumstances had generated between them, to account for the *acharnement* with which Cicero pursued him. Had Anthony been his friend even, or his near kinsman, Cicero must still have been his public enemy. And not merely for his vices; for even the grander features of his character, his towering ambition, his magnanimity, and the fascinations of his popular qualities, — were all, in the circumstances of those times, and *its* position, of a tendency dangerously uncivic.

So remarkable was the opposition, at all points, between the second Cæsar and his rival, that whereas, Anthony even in his virtues seemed dangerous to the state, Octavius gave a civic coloring to his most indifferent actions, and, with a Machiavelian policy, observed a scrupulous regard to the forms of the Republic, after every fragment of the republican institutions, the privileges of the republican magistrates, and the functions of the great popular officers, had been absorbed into his own autocracy. Even in the most prosperous days of the Roman State, when the democratic forces balanced, and were balanced by, those of the aristocracy, it was far from being a general or common praise, that a man was of a civic turn of mind, *animo civili*. Yet this praise did Augustus affect, and in reality attain, at a time when the very object of all civic feeling was absolutely extinct; so much are men governed by words. Suetonius assures us, that many evidences were current even to his times of this popular disposition (*civilitas*) in the emperor; and that it survived every experience of servile adulation in the Roman populace, and all the effects of long familiarity with irresponsible power in himself. Such a moderation of feeling, we are almost obliged to consider as a genuine and unaffected expression of his real nature; for, as an artifice of policy, it had soon lost its uses. And it is worthy of notice, that with the army he laid aside those popular manners as soon as possible.

addressing them as *milites*, not (*according* to his earlier practice) as *commilitones*. It concerned his own security, to be jealous of encroachments on his power. But of his rank, and the honors which accompanied it, he seems to have been uniformly careless. Thus, he would never leave a town or enter it by daylight, unless some higher rule of policy obliged him to do so; by which means he evaded a ceremonial of public honor which was burdensome to all the parties concerned in it. Sometimes, however, we find that men, careless of honors in their own persons, are glad to see them settling upon their family and immediate connections. But here again Augustus showed the sincerity of his moderation. For upon one occasion, when the whole audience in the Roman theatre had risen upon the entrance of his two adopted sons, at that time not seventeen years old, he was highly displeased, and even thought it necessary to publish his displeasure in a separate edict. It is another, and a striking illustration of his humility, that he willingly accepted of public appointments, and sedulously discharged the duties attached to them, in conjunction with colleagues who had been chosen with little regard to his personal partialities. In the debates of the senate, he showed the same equanimity; suffering himself patiently to be contradicted, and even with circumstances of studied incivility. In the public elections, he gave his vote like any private citizen

and, when he happened to be a candidate himself, he canvassed the electors with the same earnestness of personal application, as any other candidate with the least possible title to public favor from present power or past services. But, perhaps by no expressions of his civic spirit did Augustus so much conciliate men's minds, as by the readiness with which he participated in their social pleasures, and by the uniform severity with which he refused to apply his influence in any way which could disturb the pure administration of justice. The Roman juries (*judices* they were called), were very corrupt; and easily swayed to an unconscientious verdict, by the appearance in court of any great man on behalf of one of the parties interested; nor was such an interference with the course of private justice any ways injurious to the great man's character. The wrong which he promoted did but the more forcibly proclaim the warmth and fidelity of his friendships. So much the more generally was the uprightness of the emperor appreciated, who would neither tamper with justice himself nor countenance any motion in that direction, though it were to serve his very dearest friend, either by his personal presence, or by the use of his name. And, as if it had been a trifle merely to forbear, and to show his regard to justice in this negative way, he even allowed himself to be summoned as a witness on trials, and showed no anger when his own evidence was overborne by stronger on the other side.

This disinterested love of justice, and an integrity, so rare in the great men of Rome, could not but command the reverence of the people. But their affection, doubtless, was more conciliated by the freedom with which the emperor accepted invitations from all quarters, and shared continually in the festal pleasures of his subjects. This practice, however, he discontinued, or narrowed, as he advanced in years. Suetonius, who, as a true anecdote-monger, would solve every thing, and account for every change by some definite incident, charges this alteration in the emperor's condescensions upon one particular party at a wedding feast, where the crowd incommoded him much by their pressure and heat. But, doubtless, it happened to Augustus as to other men ; his spirits failed, and his powers of supporting fatigue or bustle, as years stole upon him. Changes, coming by insensible steps, and not willingly acknowledged, for some time escape notice ; until some sudden shock reminds a man forcibly to do that which he has long meditated in an irresolute way. The marriage banquet may have been the particular occasion from which Augustus stepped into the habits of old age, but certainly not the cause of so entire a revolution in his mode of living.

It might seem to throw some doubt, if not upon the fact, yet at least upon the sincerity, of his *civism*, that undoubtedly Augustus cultivated his kingly connections with considerable anxiety. It may have been

upon motives merely political that he kept at Rome the children of nearly all the kings then known as allies or vassals of the Roman power : a curious fact, and not generally known. In his own palace were reared a number of youthful princes ; and they were educated jointly with his own children. It is also upon record, that in many instances the fathers of these princes spontaneously repaired to Rome, and there assuming the Roman dress — as an expression of reverence to the majesty of the omnipotent State — did personal ‘suit and service’ (*more clientum*) to Augustus. It is an anecdote of not less curiosity, that a whole ‘college’ of kings subscribed money for a temple at Athens, to be dedicated in the name of Augustus. Throughout his life, indeed, this emperor paid a marked attention to all royal houses then known to Rome, as occupying the thrones upon the vast margin of the empire. It is true that in part this attention might be interpreted as given politically to so many lieutenants, wielding a remote or inaccessible power for the benefit of Rome. And the children of these kings might be regarded as hostages, ostensibly entertained for the sake of education, but really as pledges for their parents’ fidelity, and also with a view to the large reversionary advantages which might be expected to arise upon the basis of so early and affectionate a connection. But it is not the less true, that, at one period of his life, Augustus did certainly meditate some closer personal connection

with the royal families of the earth: He speculated, undoubtedly, on a marriage for himself with some barbarous princess, and at one time designed his daughter Julia as a wife for Cotiso, the king of the Getæ. Superstition perhaps disturbed the one scheme, and policy the other. He married, as is well known, for his final wife, and the partner of his life through its whole triumphant stage, Livia Drusilla; compelling her husband, Tiberius Nero, to divorce her, notwithstanding she was then six months advanced in pregnancy. With this lady, who was distinguished for her beauty, it is certain that he was deeply in love; and that might be sufficient to account for the marriage. It is equally certain, however, upon the concurring evidence of independent writers, that this connection had an oracular sanction — not to say suggestion; a circumstance *which was long remembered*, and was afterwards noticed by the Christian poet Prudentius:

‘ Idque Deūm sortes et Apollinis antra dederunt
Consilium: nunquam melius nam cädere tædas
Responsum est, quām cum prægnans nova nupta jugatur.’

His daughter Julia had been promised by turns, and always upon reasons of state, to a whole muster-roll of suitors; first of all, to a son of Mark Anthony; secondly, to the barbarous king; thirdly, to her first cousin — that Marcellus, the son of Octavia, only sister to Augustus, whose early death, in the midst of great expectations, Virgil has so beautifully introduced into

the vision of Roman grandeurs as yet unborn, which Æneas beholds in the shades; fourthly, she was promised (and this time the promise was kept) to the fortunate soldier, Agrippa, whose low birth was not permitted to obscure his military merits. By him she had a family of children, upon whom, if upon any in this world the wrath of Providence seems to have rested; for, excepting one, and in spite of all the favors that earth and heaven could unite to shower upon them, all came to an early, a violent, and an infamous end. Fifthly, upon the death of Agrippa, and again upon motives of policy, and in atrocious contempt of all the ties that nature and the human heart and human laws have hallowed, she was promised, (if that word may be applied to the violent obtrusion upon a man's bed of one who was doubly a curse — first, for what she brought, and, secondly, for what she took away,) and given to Tiberius, the future emperor. Upon the whole, as far as we can at this lay make out the connection of a man's acts and purposes, which, even to his own age, were never entirely cleared up, it is probable that, so long as the triumvirate survived, and so long as the condition of Roman power or intrigues, and the distribution of Roman influence, were such as to leave a possibility that any new triumvirate should arise — so long Augustus was secretly meditating a retreat for himself at some barbarous court, against any sudden reverse of fortune.

by means of a domestic connection, which should give him the claim of a kinsman. Such a court, however unable to make head against the collective power of Rome, might yet present a front of resistance to any single partisan who should happen to acquire a brief ascendancy; or, at the worst, as a merely defensive power, might offer a retreat, secure in distance, and difficult of access; or might be available as a means of delay for recovering from some else fatal defeat. It is certain that Augustus viewed Egypt with jealousy as a province, which might be turned to account in some such way by any inspiring insurgent. And it must have often struck him as a remarkable circumstance, which by good luck had turned out entirely to the advantage of his own family, but which might as readily have had an opposite result, that the three decisive battles of Pharsalia, of Thapsus, and of Munda, in which the empire of the world was three times over staked as the prize, had severally brought upon the defeated leaders a ruin which was total, absolute, and final. One hour had seen the whole fabric of their aspiring fortunes demolished; and no resource was left to them but either in suicide, (which, accordingly even Cæsar had meditated at one stage of the battle of Munda, when it seemed to be going against him,) or in the mercy of the victor.

That a victor in a hundred fights should in his hundred-and-first,¹ as in his first, risk the loss of that

particular battle, is inseparable from the condition of man, and the uncertainty of human means; but that the loss of this one battle should be equally fatal and irrecoverable with the loss of his first, that it should leave him with means no more cemented, and resources no better matured for retarding his fall, and throwing a long succession of hindrances in the way of his conqueror, argues some essential defect of system. Under our modern policy, military power — though it may be the growth of one man's life — soon takes root; a succession of campaigns is required for its extirpation; and it revolves backwards to its final extinction through all the stages by which originally it grew. On the Roman system this was mainly impossible from the solitariness of the Roman power: co-rival nations who might balance the victorious party, there were absolutely none; and all the underlings hastened to make their peace, whilst peace was yet open to them, on the known terms of absolute treachery to their former master, and instant surrender to the victor of the hour. For this capital defect in the tenure of Roman power, no matter in whose hands deposited, there was no absolute remedy. Many a sleepless night, during the perilous game which he played with Anthony, must have familiarized Octavius with that view of the risk, which to some extent was inseparable from his position as the leader in such a struggle carried on in such an empire. In this di-

temma, struck with the extreme necessity of applying some palliation to the case, we have no doubt that Augustus would devise the scheme of laying some distant king under such obligations to fidelity as would suffice to stand the first shock of misfortune. Such a person would have power enough of a direct military kind, to face the storm at its outbreak. He would have power of another kind in his distance. He would be sustained by the courage of hope, as a kinsman having a contingent interest in a kinsman's prosperity. And, finally, he would be sustained by the courage of despair, as one who never could expect to be trusted by the opposite party. In the worst case, such a prince would always offer a breathing time and a respite to his friends, were it only by his remoteness, and if not the *means* of rallying, yet at least the *time* for rallying, more especially as the escape to his frontier would be easy to one who had long forecast it. We can hardly doubt that Augustus meditated such schemes; that he laid them aside only as his power began to cement and to knit together after the battle of Actium; and that the memory and the prudentia tradition of this plan survived in the imperial family so long as itself survived. Amongst other anecdotes of the same tendency, two are recorded of Nero, the emperor in whom expired the line of the original Cæsars, which strengthen us in a belief of what is otherwise in itself so probable. Nero, in his first

distractions, upon receiving the fatal tidings of the revolt in Gaul, when reviewing all possible plans of escape from the impending danger, thought at intervals of throwing himself on the protection of the barbarous King Vologesus. And twenty years afterwards, when the Pseudo-Nero appeared, he found a strenuous champion and protector in the King of the Parthians. Possibly, had an opportunity offered for searching the Parthian chancery, some treaty would have been found binding the kings of Parthia, from the age of Augustus through some generations downwards, in requital of services there specified, or of treasures lodged, to secure a perpetual asylum to the posterity of the Julian family.

The cruelties of Augustus were perhaps equal in atrocity to any which are recorded; and the equivocal apology for those acts (one which might as well be used to aggravate as to palliate the case) is, that they were not prompted by a ferocious nature, but by calculating policy. He once actually slaughtered upon an altar a large body of his prisoners; and such was the contempt with which he was regarded by some of that number, that, when led out to death, they saluted their other proscriber, Anthony, with military honors, acknowledging merit even in an enemy, but Augustus they passed with scornful silence, or with loud reproaches. Too certainly no man has ever contended for empire with unsullied conscience, or laid pure

hands upon the ark of so magnificent a prize. Every friend to Augustus must have wished that the twelve years of his struggle might for ever be blotted out from human remembrance. During the forty-two years of his prosperity and his triumph, being above fear, he showed the natural lenity of his temper.

That prosperity, in a public sense, has been rarely equalled ; but far different was his fate, and memorable was the contrast, within the circuit of his own family. This lord of the universe groaned as often as the ladies of his house, his daughter and grand-daughter, were mentioned. The shame which he felt on their account, led him even to unnatural designs, and to wishes not less so ; for at one time he entertained a plan for putting the elder Julia to death — and at another, upon hearing that Phœbe (one of the female slaves in his household) had hanged herself, he exclaimed audibly, — ‘Would that I had been the father of Phœbe !’ It must, however, be granted, that in this miserable affair he behaved with very little of his usual discretion. In the first paroxysms of his rage, on discovering his daughter’s criminal conduct, he made a communication of the whole to the senate. That body could do nothing in such a matter, either by act or by suggestion : and in a short time, as every-body could have foreseen, he himself repented of his own want of self-command. Upon the whole, it cannot be denied, that, according to the remark of Jeremy Taylor, of all the men signally

decorated by history, Augustus Cæsar is that one who exemplifies, in the most emphatic terms, the mixed tenor of human life, and the equitable distribution, even on this earth, of good and evil fortune. He made himself master of the world, and against the most formidable competitors ; his power was absolute, from the rising to the setting sun ; and yet in his own house, where the peasant who does the humblest chores, claims an undisputed authority, he was baffled, dishonored, and made ridiculous. He was loved by nobody ; and if, at the moment of his death, he desired his friends to dismiss him from this world by the common expression of scenical applause, (*vos plaudite !*) in that valedictory injunction he expressed inadvertently the true value of his own long life, which, in strict candor, may be pronounced one continued series of histrionic efforts, and of excellent acting, adapted to selfish ends.

CHAPTER III.

THE next three emperors, Caligula, Claudius, and Nero, were the last princes who had any connection by blood¹⁶ with the Julian house. In Nero, the sixth emperor, expired the last of the Cæsars, who was such in reality. These three were also the first in that long line of monsters, who, at different times, under the title of Cæsars, dishonored humanity more memorably, than was possible, except in the cases of those (if any such can be named) who have abused the same enormous powers in times of the same civility, and in defiance of the same general illumination. But for them it is a fact, that some crimes, which now stain the page of history, would have been accounted fabulous dreams of impure romancers, taxing their extravagant imaginations to create combinations of wickedness more hideous than civilized men would tolerate, and more unnatural than the human heart could conceive. Let us, by way of example, take a short chapter from the diabolical life of Caligula : — In what way did he treat his nearest and tenderest female connections ? His mother had been tortured and murdered by another tyrant almost as fiendish as himself. She was happily removed from his cruelty. Disdaining, however, to

acknowledge any connection with the blood of so obscure a man as Agrippa, he publicly gave out that his mother was indeed the daughter of Julia, but by an incestuous commerce with her father Augustus. His three sisters he debauched. One died, and her he canonized; the other two he prostituted to the basest of his own attendants. Of his wives, it would be hard to say whether they were first sought and won with more circumstances of injury and outrage, or dismissed with more insult and levity. The one whom he treated best, and with most profession of love, and who commonly rode by his side, equipped with spear and shield, to his military inspections and reviews of the soldiery, though not particularly beautiful, was exhibited to his friends at banquets in a state of absolute nudity. His motive for treating her with so much kindness, was, probably that she brought him a daughter; and her he acknowledged as his own child, from the early brutality with which she attacked the eyes and cheeks of other infants who were presented to her as play-fellows. Hence it would appear that he was aware of his own ferocity, and treated it as a jest. The levity, indeed, which he mingled with his worst and most inhuman acts, and the slightness of the occasions upon which he delighted to hang his most memorable atrocities, aggravated their impression at the time, and must have contributed greatly to sharpen the sword of vengeance. His palace happened to be

contiguous to the circus. Some seats, it seems, were open indiscriminately to the public; consequently, the only way in which they could be appropriated, was by taking possession of them as early as the midnight preceding any great exhibitions. Once, when it happened that his sleep was disturbed by such an occasion, he sent in soldiers to eject them; and with orders so rigorous, as it appeared by the event, that in this singular tumult, twenty Roman knights, and as many mothers of families, were cudgelled to death upon the spot, to say nothing of what the reporter calls ‘innumeram turbam ceteram.’

But this is a trifle to another anecdote reported by the same authority:—On some occasion it happened that a dearth prevailed, either generally of cattle, or of such cattle as were used for feeding the wild beasts reserved for the bloody exhibitions of the amphitheatre. Food could be had, and perhaps at no very exorbitant price, but on terms somewhat higher than the ordinary market price. A slight excuse served with Caligula for acts the most monstrous. Instantly repairing to the public jails, and causing all the prisoners to pass in review before him (*custodiarum seriem recognoscens*), he pointed to two bald-headed men, and ordered that the whole file of intermediate persons should be marched off to the dens of the wild beasts: ‘Tell them off,’ said he, ‘from the bald man to the bald man.’ Yet these were prisoners committed, not for

punishment, but trial. Nor, had it been otherwise, were the charges against them equal, but running through every gradation of guilt. But the *elegia*, or records of their commitment, he would not so much as look at. With such inordinate capacities for cruelty, we cannot wonder that he should in his common conversation have deplored the tameness and insipidity of his own times and reign, as likely to be marked by no wide-spreading calamity. ‘Augustus,’ said he, ‘was happy; for in his reign occurred the slaughter of Varus and his legions. Tiberius was happy; for in his occurred that glorious fall of the great amphitheatre at Fidenæ. But for me — alas! alas!’ And then he would pray earnestly for fire or slaughter — pestilence or famine. Famine indeed was to some extent in his own power; and accordingly, as far as his courage would carry him, he did occasionally try that mode of tragedy upon the people of Rome, by shutting up the public granaries against them. As he blended his mirth and a truculent sense of the humorous with his cruelties, we cannot wonder that he should soon blend his cruelties with his ordinary festivities, and that his daily banquets would soon become insipid without them. Hence he required a daily supply of executions in his own halls and banqueting rooms; nor was a dinner held to be complete without such a dessert. Artists were sought out who had dexterity and strength enough to do what Lucan somewhere calls *ensem rotare*, that

is, to cut off a human head with one whirl of the sword. Even this became insipid, as wanting one main element of misery to the sufferer, and an indispensible condiment to the jaded palate of the connoisseur, viz., a lingering duration. As a pleasant variety, therefore, the tormentors were introduced with their various instruments of torture; and many a dismal tragedy in that mode of human suffering was conducted in the sacred presence during the emperor's hours of amiable relaxation.

The result of these horrid indulgences was exactly what we might suppose, that even such scenes ceased to irritate the languid appetite, and yet that without them life was not endurable. Jaded and exhausted as the sense of pleasure had become in Caligula, still it could be roused into any activity by nothing short of these murderous luxuries. Hence, it seems, that he was continually tampering and dallying with the thought of murder; and like the old Parisian jeweller Cardillac, in Louis XIV.'s time, who was stung with a perpetual lust for murdering the possessors of fine diamonds—not so much for the value of the prize (of which he never hoped to make any use), as from an unconquerable desire of precipitating himself into the difficulties and hazards of the murder,—Caligula never failed to experience (and sometimes even to acknowledge) a secret temptation to any murder which seemed either more than usually abominable, or more

than usually difficult. Thus, when the two **consuls** were seated at his table, he burst out into sudden and profuse laughter; and upon their courteously requesting to know what witty and admirable conceit might be the occasion of the imperial mirth, he frankly owned to them, and doubtless he did not improve their appetites by this confession, that in fact he was laughing, and that he could not *but* laugh, (and then the monster laughed immoderately again,) at the pleasant thought of seeing them both headless, and that with so little trouble to himself, (*uno suo nuto,*) he could have both their throats cut. No doubt he was continually balancing the arguments for and against such little *escapades*; nor had any person a reason for security in the extraordinary obligations, whether of hospitality or of religious vows, which seemed to lay him under some peculiar restraints in that case above all others; for such circumstances of peculiarity, by which the murder would be stamped with unusual atrocity, were but the more likely to make its fascinations irresistible. Hence he dallied with the thoughts of murdering her whom he loved best, and indeed exclusively — his wife Cæsonia; and whilst fondling her, and toying playfully with her polished throat, he was distracted (as he half insinuated to her) between the desire of caressing it, which might be often repeated, and that of cutting it, which could be gratified but once.

Nero (for as to Cladius, he came too late to the

throne to indulge any propensities of this nature with so little discretion) was but a variety of the same species. He also was an amateur, and an enthusiastic amateur of murder. But as this taste, in the most ingenious hands, is limited and monotonous in its modes of manifestation, it would be tedious to run through the long Suetonian roll-call of his peccadilloes in this way. One only we shall cite, to illustrate the amorous delight with which he pursued any murder which happened to be seasoned highly to his taste by enormous atrocity and by almost unconquerable difficulty. It would really be pleasant, were it not for the revolting consideration of the persons concerned, and their relation to each other, to watch the tortuous pursuit of the hunter, and the doubles of the game, in this obstinate chase. For certain reasons of state, as Nero attempted to persuade himself, but in reality because no other crime had the same attractions of unnatural horror about it, he resolved to murder his mother Agrippina. This being settled, the next thing was to arrange the mode and the tools. Naturally enough, according to the custom then prevalent in Rome, he first attempted the thing by poison. The poison failed ; for Agrippina, anticipating tricks of this kind, had armed her constitution against them, like Mithridates ; and daily took potent antidotes and prophylactics. Or else (which is more probable) the emperor's agent in such purposes fearing his sudden repentance and remorse on first

hearing of his mother's death, or possibly even witnessing her agonies, had composed a poison of inferior strength. This had certainly occurred in the case of Britannicus, who had thrown off with ease the first dose administered to him by Nero. Upon which he had summoned to his presence the woman employed in the affair, and compelling her by threats to mingle a more powerful potion in his own presence, had tried it successively upon different animals, until he was satisfied with its effects ; after which, immediately inviting Britannicus to a banquet, he had finally dispatched him. On Agrippina, however, no changes in the poison, whether of kind or strength, had any effect : so that, after various trials, this mode of murder was abandoned, and the emperor addressed himself to other plans. The first of these was some curious mechanical device, by which a false ceiling was to have been suspended by bolts above her bed ; and in the middle of the night, the bolt being suddenly drawn, a vast weight would have descended with a ruinous destruction to all below. This scheme, however, taking air from the indiscretion of some amongst the accomplices, reached the ears of Agrippina ; upon which the old lady looked about her too sharply to leave much hope in that scheme : so that also was abandoned. Next, he conceived the idea of an artificial ship, which, at the touch of a few springs, might fall to pieces in deep water. Such a ship was prepared, and stationed at a suitable

point. But the main difficulty remained, which was to persuade the old lady to go on board. Not that she knew in this case *who* had been the ship-builder, for that would have ruined all ; but it seems that she took it ill to be hunted in this murderous spirit ; and was out of humor with her son ; besides, that any proposal coming from him, though previously indifferent to her, would have instantly become suspected. To meet this difficulty a sort of reconciliation was proposed, and a very affectionate message sent, which had the effect of throwing Agrippina off her guard, and seduced her to Baiæ for the purpose of joining the emperor's party at a great banquet held in commemoration of a solemn festival. She came by water in a sort of light frigate, and was to return in the same way. Meantime Nero tampered with the commander of her vessel, and prevailed upon him to wreck it. What was to be done ? The great lady was anxious to return to Rome, and no proper conveyance was at hand. Suddenly it was suggested, as if by chance, that a ship of the emperor's, new and properly equipped, was moored at a neighboring station. This was readily accepted by Agrippina : the emperor accompanied her to the place of embarkation, took a most tender leave of her, and saw her set sail. It was necessary that the vessel should get into deep water before the experiment could be made ; and with the utmost agitation this pious son awaited news of the result. Suddenly a messenger

rushed breathless into his presence, and horrified him by the joyful information that his august mother had met with an alarming accident ; but, by the blessing of Heaven, had escaped safe and sound, and was now on her road to mingle congratulations with her affectionate son. The ship, it seems, had done its office ; the mechanism had played admirably ; but who can provide for everything ? The old lady, it turned out, could swim like a duck ; and the whole result had been to refresh her with a little sea-bathing. Here was worshipful intelligence. Could any man's temper be expected to stand such continued sieges ? Money, and trouble, and infinite contrivance, wasted upon one old woman, who absolutely would not, upon any terms, be murdered ! Provoking it certainly was ; and of a man like Nero it could not be expected that he should any longer dissemble his disgust, or put up with such repeated affronts. He rushed upon his simple congratulating friend, swore that he had come to murder him, and as nobody could have suborned him but Agrippina, he ordered her off to instant execution. And, unquestionably, if people will not be murdered quietly and in a civil way, they must expect that such forbearance is not to continue for ever ; and obviously have themselves only to blame for any harshness or violence which they may have rendered necessary.

It is singular, and shocking at the same time, to mention, that, for this atrocity Nero did absolutely

receive solemn congratulations from all orders of men. With such evidences of base servility in the public mind, and of the utter corruption which they had sustained in their elementary feelings, it is the less astonishing that he should have made other experiments upon the public patience, which seem expressly designed to try how much it would support. Whether he were really the author of the desolating fire which consumed Rome for six days¹⁷ and seven nights, and drove the mass of the people into the tombs and sepulchres for shelter, is yet a matter of some doubt. But one great presumption against it, founded on its desperate imprudence, as attacking the people in their primary comforts, is considerably weakened by the enormous servility of the Romans in the case just stated: they who could volunteer congratulations to a son for butchering his mother, (no matter on what pretended suspicions,) might reasonably be supposed incapable of any resistance which required courage even in a case of self-defence, or of just revenge. The direct reasons, however, for implicating him in this affair, seem at present insufficient. He was displeased, it seems, with the irregularity and unsightliness of the antique buildings, and also with the streets, as too narrow and winding, (*angustiis flexurisque vicorum.*) But in this he did but express what was no doubt the common judgment of all his contemporaries who had seen the beautiful cities of Greece and Asia

Minor. The Rome of that time was in many parts built of wood; and there is much probability that it must have been a *picturesque* city, and in parts almost grotesque. But it is remarkable, and a fact which we have nowhere seen noticed, that the ancients, whether Greeks or Romans, had no eye for the picturesque; nay, that it was a sense utterly unawakened amongst them; and that the very conception of the picturesque, as of a thing distinct from the beautiful, is not once alluded to through the whole course of ancient literature, nor would it have been intelligible to any ancient critic; so that, whatever attraction for the eye might exist in the Rome of that day, there is little doubt that it was of a kind to be felt only by modern spectators. Mere dissatisfaction with its external appearance, which must have been a pretty general sentiment, argued, therefore, no necessary purpose of destroying it. Certainly it would be weightier ground of suspicion, if it were really true that some of his agents were detected on the premises of different senators in the act of applying combustibles to their mansions. But this story wears a very fabulous air. For why resort to the private dwellings of great men, where any intruder was sure of attracting notice, when the same effect and with the same deadly results, might have been attained quietly and secretly in so many of the humble Roman *cænacula*?

The great loss on this memorable occasion was in

the heraldic and ancestral honors of the city. Historic Rome then went to wreck for ever. Then perished the *domus priscorum ducum hostilibus adhuc spoliis adornatæ*; the ‘rostral’ palace; the mansion of the Pompeys; the Blenheims and the Strathfieldsays of the Scipios, the Marcelli, the Paulli, and the Cæsars; then perished the aged trophies from Carthage and from Gaul; and, in short, as the historian sums up the lamentable desolation, ‘*quidquid visendum atque memorabile ex antiquitate duraverat.*’ And this of itself might lead one to suspect the emperor’s hand as the original agent; for by no one act was it possible so entirely and so suddenly to wean the people from their old republican recollections, and in one week to obliterate the memorials of their popular forces, and the trophies of many ages. The old people of Rome were gone; their characteristic dress even was gone; for already in the time of Augustus they had laid aside the *toga*, and assumed the cheaper and scantier *pænula*, so that the eye sought in vain for Virgil’s

‘*Romanus rerum dominos gentemque togatam.*’

Why then, after all the constituents of Roman grandeur had passed away, should their historical trophies survive, recalling to them the scenes of departed heroism, in which they had no personal property, and suggesting to them vain hopes, which for them were never to be other than chimerae? Even in that sense, therefore, and as a great deposi-

tory of heart-stirring historical remembrances, Rome was profitably destroyed; and in any other sense, whether for health or for the conveniences of polished life, or for architectural magnificence, there never was a doubt that the Roman people gained infinitely by this conflagration. For, like London, it arose from its ashes with a splendor proportioned to its vast expansion of wealth and population; and marble took the place of wood. For the moment, however, this event must have been felt by the people as an overwhelming calamity. And it serves to illustrate the passive endurance and timidity of the popular temper, and to what extent it might be provoked with impunity, that in this state of general irritation and effervescence, Nero absolutely forbade them to meddle with the ruins of their own dwellings—taking that charge upon himself, with a view to the vast wealth which he anticipated from sifting the rubbish. And, as if that mode of plunder were not sufficient, he exacted compulsory contributions to the rebuilding of the city so indiscriminately, as to press heavily upon all men's finances; and thus, in the public account which universally imputed the fire to him, he was viewed as a twofold robber, who sought to heal one calamity by the infliction of another and a greater.

The monotony of wickedness and outrage becomes a length fatiguing to the coarsest and most callous sensess; and the historian, even, who eaters professedly

for the taste which feeds upon the monstrous and the hyperbolical, is glad at length to escape from the long evolution of his insane atrocities, to the striking and truly scenical catastrophe of retribution which overtook them, and avenged the wrongs of an insulted world. Perhaps history contains no more impressive scenes than those in which the justice of Providence at length arrested the monstrous career of Nero.

It was at Naples, and by a remarkable fatality, on the very anniversary of his mother's murder, that he received the first intelligence of the revolt in Gaul under the Proprætor Vindex. This news for about a week he treated with levity ; and, like Henry VII. of England, who was nettled, not so much at being proclaimed a rebel, as because he was described under the slighting denomination of ‘one Henry Tidder or Tudor,’ he complained bitterly that Vindex had mentioned him by his family name of *Ænobarbus*, rather than his assumed one of Nero. But much more keenly he resented the insulting description of himself as a ‘miserable harper,’ appealing to all about him whether they had ever known a better, and offering to stake the truth of all the other charges against himself upon the accuracy of this in particular. So little even in this instance was he alive to the true point of the insult; not thinking it any disgrace that a Roman emperor should be chiefly known to the world in the character of a harper, but only if he should happen

to be a bad one. Even in those days, however, imperfect as were the means of travelling, rebellion moved somewhat too rapidly to allow any long interval of security so light-minded as this. One courier followed upon the heels of another, until he felt the necessity for leaving Naples; and he returned to Rome, as the historian says, *prætrepidus*; by which word, however, according to its genuine classical acceptation, we apprehend is not meant that he was highly alarmed, but only that he was in a great hurry. That he was not yet under any real alarm (for he trusted in certain prophecies, which, like those made to the Scottish tyrant ‘kept the promise to the ear, but broke it to the sense,’) is pretty evident from his conduct on reaching the capitol. For, without any appeal to the senate or the people, but sending out a few summonses to some men of rank, he held a hasty council, which he speedily dismissed, and occupied the rest of the day with experiments on certain musical instruments of recent invention, in which the keys were moved by hydraulic contrivances. He had come to Rome, it appeared, merely from a sense of decorum.

Suddenly, however, arrived news, which fell upon him with the force of a thunderbolt, that the revolt had extended to the Spanish provinces, and was headed by Galba. He fainted upon hearing this; and falling to the ground, lay for a long time lifeless, as

it seemed, and speechless. Upon coming to himself again, he tore his robe, struck his forehead, and exclaimed aloud — that for him all was over. In this agony of mind, it strikes across the utter darkness of the scene with the sense of a sudden and cheering flash, recalling to us the possible goodness and fidelity of human nature — when we read that one humble creature adhered to him, and, according to her slender means, gave him consolation during these trying moments ; this was the woman who had tended his infant years ; and she now recalled to his remembrance such instances of former princes in adversity, as appeared fitted to sustain his drooping spirits. It seems, however, that, according to the general course of violent emotions, the rebound of high spirits was in proportion to his first despondency. He omitted nothing of his usual luxury or self-indulgence, and he even found spirits for going *incognito* to the theatre, where he took sufficient interest in the public performances, to send a message to a favorite actor. At times, even in this hopeless situation, his native ferocity returned upon him, and he was believed to have framed plans for removing all his enemies at once — the leaders of the rebellion, by appointing successors to their offices, and secretly sending assassins to dispatch their persons ; the senate, by poison at a great banquet ; the Gaulish provinces, by delivering them up for pillage to the army ; the city, by again setting it on fire

whilst, at the same time, a vast number of wild beasts was to have been turned loose upon the unarmed populace — for the double purpose of destroying them, and of distracting their attention from the fire. But, as the mood of his frenzy changed, these sanguinary schemes were abandoned, (not, however, under any feelings of remorse, but from mere despair of effecting them,) and on the same day, *but after a luxurious dinner*, the imperial monster grew bland and pathetic in his ideas ; he would proceed to the rebellious army ; he would present himself unarmed to their view ; and would recall them to their duty by the mere spectacle of his tears. Upon the pathos with which he would weep he was resolved to rely entirely. And having received the guilty to his mercy without distinction, upon the following day he would unite *his* joy with *their* joy, and would chant hymns of victory (*epinicia*) — ‘which by the way,’ said he, suddenly, breaking off to his favorite pursuits, ‘it is necessary that I should immediately compose.’ This caprice vanished like the rest ; and he made an effort to enlist the slaves and citizens into his service, and to raise by extortion a large **military** chest. But in the midst of these vacillating purposes fresh tidings surprised him — other armies had revolted, and the rebellion was spreading contagiously. This consummation of **his** alarms reached him at dinner ; and the expressions of **his** angry fears took even a scenical air ; he tore the

dispatches, upset the table, and dashed to pieces upon the ground two crystal beakers — which had a high value as works of art, even in the *Aurea Domus*, from the sculptures which adorned them.

He now prepared for flight; and sending forward commissioners to prepare the fleet at Ostia for his reception, he tampered with such officers of the army as were at hand, to prevail upon them to accompany his retreat. But all showed themselves indisposed to such schemes, and some flatly refused. Upon which he turned to other counsels; sometimes meditating a flight to the King of Parthia, or even to throw himself on the mercy of Galba; sometimes inclining rather to the plan of venturing into the forum in mourning apparel, begging pardon for his past offences, and, as a last resource, entreating that he might receive the appointment of Egyptian prefect. This plan, however, he hesitated to adopt, from some apprehension that he should be torn to pieces in his road to the forum; and, at all events, he concluded to postpone it to the following day. Meantime events were now hurrying to their catastrophe, which for ever anticipated that intention. His hours were numbered, and the closing scene was at hand.

In the middle of the night he was aroused from slumber with the intelligence that the military guard, who did duty at the palace, had all quitted their posts. Upon this the unhappy prince leaped from his couch,

never again to taste the luxury of sleep, and dispatched messengers to his friends. No answers were returned ; and upon that he went personally with a small retinue to their hotels. But he found their doors everywhere closed ; and all his importunities could not avail to extort an answer. Sadly and slowly he returned to his own bedchamber ; but there again he found fresh instances of desertion, which had occurred during his short absence ; the pages of his bedchamber had fled, carrying with them the coverlids of the imperial bed, which were probably inwrought with gold, and even a golden box, in which Nero had on the preceding day deposited poison prepared against the last extremity. Wounded to the heart by this general desertion, and perhaps by some special case of ingratitude, such as would probably enough be signalized in the flight of his personal favorites, he called for a gladiator of the household to come and dispatch him. But none appearing — ‘What !’ said he, ‘ have I neither friend nor foe ? ’ And so saying, he ran towards the Tiber, with the purpose of drowning himself. But that paroxysm, like all the rest, proved transient ; and he expressed a wish for some hiding-place, or momentary asylum, in which he might collect his unsettled spirits, and fortify his wandering resolution. Such a retreat was offered him by his *libertus* Phaon, in his own rural villa, about four miles distant from Rome. The offer was accepted ; and the emperor, without further pre-

paration than that of throwing over his person a short mantle of a dusky hue, and enveloping his head and face in a handkerchief, mounted his horse, and left Rome with four attendants. It was still night, but probably verging towards the early dawn; and even at that hour the imperial party met some travellers on their way to Rome (coming up no doubt,¹⁸ on law business) — who said, as they passed, ‘These men are certainly in chase of Nero.’ Two other incidents, of an interesting nature, are recorded of this short but memorable ride: at one point of the road the shouts of the soldiery assailed their ears from the neighbouring encampment of Galba. They were probably then getting under arms for their final march to take possession of the palace. At another point, an accident occurred of a more unfortunate kind, but so natural and so well circumstantiated, that it serves to verify the whole narrative; a dead body was lying on the road, at which the emperor’s horse started so violently as nearly to dismount his rider, and under the difficulty of the moment compelled him to withdraw the hand which held up the handkerchief, and suddenly to expose his features. Precisely at this critical moment it happened that an old half-pay officer passed, recognized the emperor, and saluted him. Perhaps it was with some purpose of applying a remedy to this unfortunate rencontre, that the party dismounted at a point where several roads met, and turned their horses adrift

to graze at will amongst the furze and brambles. Their own purpose was, to make their way to the back of the villa; but, to accomplish *that*, it was necessary that they should first cross a plantation of reeds, from the peculiar state of which they found themselves obliged to cover successively each space upon which they trode with parts of their dress, in order to gain any supportable footing. In this way, and contending with such hardships, they reached at length the postern side of the villa. Here we must suppose that there was no regular ingress; for, after waiting until an entrance was pierced, it seems that the emperor could avail himself of it in no more dignified posture, than by creeping through the hole on his hands and feet, (*quadrupes per angustias receptus.*)

Now, then, after such anxiety, alarm, and hardship, Nero had reached a quiet rural asylum. But for the unfortunate occurrence of his horse's alarm with the passing of the soldier, he might perhaps have counted on a respite of a day or two in this noiseless and obscure abode. But what a habitation for him who was yet ruler of the world in the eye of law, and even *de facto* was so, had any fatal accident befallen his aged competitor! The room in which (as the one most removed from notice and suspicion) he had secreted himself, was a *cella*, or little sleeping closet of a slave, furnished only with a miserable pallet and a coarse rug. Here lay the founder and possessor of

the Golden House, too happy if he might hope for the peaceable possession even of this miserable crypt. But that, he knew too well, was impossible. A rival pretender to the empire was like the plague of fire — as dangerous in the shape of a single spark left unextinguished, as in that of a prosperous conflagration. But a few brief sands yet remained to run in the emperor's hour-glass; much variety of degradation or suffering seemed scarcely within the possibilities of his situation, or within the compass of the time. Yet, as though Providence had decreed that his humiliation should pass through every shape, and speak by every expression which came home to his understanding, or was intelligible to his senses, even in these few moments he was attacked by hunger and thirst. No other bread could be obtained (or, perhaps, if the emperor's presence were concealed from the household, it was not safe to raise suspicion by calling for better) than that which was ordinarily given to slaves, coarse, black, and, to a palate so luxurious, doubtless disgusting. This accordingly he rejected; but a little tepid water he drank. After which, with the haste of one who fears that he may be prematurely interrupted, but otherwise, with all the reluctance which we may imagine, and which his streaming tears proclaimed, he addressed himself to the last labor in which he supposed himself to have ~~any~~ interest on this earth — that of digging a grave Measuring a space adjusted to the proportions of his

person, he inquired anxiously for any loose fragments of marble, such as might suffice to line it. He requested also to be furnished with wood and water, as the materials for the last sepulchral rites. And these labors were accompanied, or continually interrupted by tears and lamentations, or by passionate ejaculations on the blindness of fortune, in suffering so divine an artist to be thus violently snatched away, and on the calamitous fate of musical science, which then stood on the brink of so dire an eclipse. In these moments he was most truly in an *agony*, according to the original meaning of that word ; for the conflict was great between two master principles of his nature : on the one hand, he clung with the weakness of a girl to life, even in that miserable shape to which it had now sunk ; and like the poor malefactor, with whose last struggles Prior has so atrociously amused himself, ‘ he often took leave, but was loath to depart.’ Yet, on the other hand, to resign his life very speedily, seemed his only chance for escaping the contumelies, perhaps the tortures of his enemies ; and, above all other considerations, for making sure of a burial, and possibly of burial rites ; to want which, in the judgment of the ancients, was the last consummation of misery. Thus occupied, and thus distracted — sternly attracted to the grave by his creed, hideously repelled by infirmity of nature — he was suddenly interrupted by a courier with letters for the master of the house ; letters, and

from Rome ! What was their import ? That was soon told — briefly that Nero was adjudged to be a public enemy by the senate, and that official orders were issued for apprehending him, in order that he might be brought to condign punishment according to the method of ancient precedent. Ancient precedent ! *more majorem !* And how was that ? eagerly demanded the emperor. He was answered — that the state criminal in such cases was first stripped naked, then impaled as it were between the prongs of a pitch-fork, and in that condition scourged to death. Horror-struck with this account, he drew forth two poniards, or short swords, tried their edges, and then, in utter imbecility of purpose, returned them to their scabbards, alleging that the destined moment had not yet arrived. Then he called upon Sporus, the infamous partner in his former excesses, to commence the funeral anthem. Others, again, he besought to lead the way in dying, and to sustain him by the spectacle of their example. But this purpose also he dismissed in the very moment of utterance ; and turning away despairingly, he apostrophized himself in words reproachful or animating, now taxing his nature with infirmity of purpose, now calling on himself by name, with adjurations to remember his dignity, and to act worthy of his supreme station : *οὐ πρέπει Νερωνί, cried he, οὐ πρέπει· νῆστος δεῖ εἰ τοῖς τοιμήτοις· ἀγε, ἔγειρε σεαυτὸν — i. e. · Fie, fie, then, Nero ! such a season calls for perfect self-possession. Up, then, and rouse thyself to action.*

Thus, and in similar efforts to master the weakness of his reluctant nature — weakness which would extort pity from the severest minds, were it not from the odious connection which in him it had with cruelty the most merciless — did this unhappy prince, *jam non salutis spem sed exitii solatium quærens*, consume the flying moments, until at length his ears caught the fatal sounds or echoes from a body of horsemen riding up to the villa. These were the officers charged with his arrest; and if he should fall into their hands alive, he knew that his last chance was over for liberating himself, by a Roman death, from the burthen of ignominious life, and from a lingering torture. He paused from his restless motions, listened attentively, then repeated a line from Homer —

‘ Ιππων μ' ὠκυπόδων ἀμφὶ κτύπος οὔτα βάλλει·

(The resounding tread of swift-footed horses reverberates upon my ears); — then under some momentary impulse of courage, gained perhaps by figuring to himself the bloody populace rioting upon his mangled body, yet even then needing the auxiliary hand and vicarious courage of his private secretary, the feeble-hearted prince stabbed himself in the throat. The wound, however, was not such as to cause instant death. He was still breathing, and not quite speechless, when the centurion who commanded the party entered the closet; and to this officer who uttered a few hollow words of encouragement, he was still able

to make a brief reply. But in the very effort of speaking he expired, and with an expression of horror impressed upon his stiffened features, which communicated a sympathetic horror to all beholders.

Such was the too memorable tragedy which closed for ever the brilliant line of the Julian family, and translated the august title of Cæsar from its original purpose as a proper name to that of an official designation. It is the most striking instance upon record of a dramatic and extreme vengeance overtaking extreme guilt: for, as Nero had exhausted the utmost possibilities of crime, so it may be affirmed that he drank off the cup of suffering to the very extremity of what his peculiar nature allowed. And in no life of so short a duration, have there ever been crowded equal extremities of gorgeous prosperity and abject infamy. It may be added, as another striking illustration of the rapid mutability and revolutionary excesses which belonged to what has been properly called the Roman *stratocracy* then disposing of the world, that within no very great succession of weeks that same victorious rebel, the Emperor Galba, at whose feet

he had been self-immolated, was laid a murdered corpse in the same identical cell which had witnessed the lingering agonies of his unhappy victim. This was the act of an emancipated slave, anxious, by a vindictive insult to the remains of one prince, to place on record his gratitude to another. ‘So runs the

world away !' And in this striking way is retribution sometimes dispensed.

In the sixth Cæsar terminated the Julian line. The three next princes in the succession were personally uninteresting ; and with a slight reserve in favor of Otho, whose motives for committing suicide (if truly reported) argue great nobility of mind,¹⁹ were even brutal in the tenor of their lives and monstrous ; besides that the extreme brevity of their several reigns (all three, taken conjunctly, having held the supreme power for no more than twelve months and twenty days) dismisses them from all effectual station or right to a separate notice in the line of Cæsars. Coming to the tenth in the succession, Vespasian, and his two sons, Titus and Domitian, who make up the list of the twelve Cæsars, as they are usually called, we find matter for deeper political meditation and subjects of curious research. But these emperors would be more properly classed with the five who succeeded them -- Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the two Antonines ; after whom comes the young ruffian, Commodus, another Caligula or Nero, from whose short and infamous reign Gibbon takes up his tale of the decline of the empire. And this classification would probably have prevailed, had not the very curious work of Suetonius, whose own life and period of observation determined the series and cycle of his subjects, led to a different distribution. But as it is evident that, in the suc-

cession of the first twelve Cæsars, the six latter have no connection whatever by descent, collaterally, or otherwise, with the six first, it would be a more logical distribution to combine them according to the fortunes of the state itself, and the succession of its prosperity through the several stages of splendor, declension, revival, and final decay. Under this arrangement, the first seventeen would belong to the first stage; Commodus would open the second; Aurelian down to Constantine or Julian would fill the third; and Jovian to Augustulus would bring up the melancholy rear. Meantime it will be proper, after thus briefly throwing our eyes over the monstrous atrocities of the early Cæsars, to spend a few lines in examining their origin, and the circumstances which favored their growth. For a mere hunter after hidden or forgotten singularities; a lover on their own account of all strange perversities and freaks of nature, whether in action, taste, or opinion; for a collector and amateur of misgrowths and abortions; for a Suetonius, in short, it may be quite enough to state and to arrange his cabinet of specimens from the marvelous in human nature. But certainly in modern times, any historian, however little affecting the praise of a philosophic investigator, would feel himself called upon to remove a little the taint of the miraculous and preternatural which adheres to such anecdotes by entering into the psychological grounds of their

possibility ; whether lying in any peculiarly vicious education, early familiarity with bad models, corrupting associations, or other plausible key to effects, which, taken separately, and out of their natural connection with their explanatory causes, are apt rather to startle and revolt the feelings of sober thinkers. Except, perhaps, in some chapters of Italian history, as, for example, among the most profligate of the Papal houses, and amongst some of the Florentine princes, we find hardly any parallel to the atrocities of Caligula and Nero ; nor indeed was Tiberius much (if at all) behind them, though otherwise so wary and cautious in his conduct. The same tenor of licentiousness beyond the needs of the individual, the same craving after the marvellous and the stupendous in guilt, is continually emerging in succeeding emperors — in Vitellius, in Domitian, in Commodus, in Caracalla — everywhere, in short, where it was not overruled by one of two causes, either by original goodness of nature too powerful to be mastered by ordinary seductions, (and in some cases removed from their influence by an early apprenticeship to camps,) or by the terrors of an exemplary ruin immediately preceding. For such a determinate tendency to the enormous and the anomalous, sufficient causes must exist. What were they ?

In the first place, we may observe that the people of Rome in that age were generally more corrupt by

many degrees than has been usually supposed possible. The effect of revolutionary times, to relax all modes of moral obligation, and to unsettle the moral sense, has been well and philosophically stated by Mr. Coleridge; but that would hardly account for the utter licentiousness and depravity of Imperial Rome. Looking back to Republican Rome, and considering the state of public morals but fifty years before the emperors, we can with difficulty believe that the descendants of a people so severe in their habits could thus rapidly degenerate, and that a populace, once so hardy and masculine, should assume the manners which we might expect in the debauchees of Daphne (the infamous suburb of Antioch) or of Canopus, into which settled the very lees and dregs of the vicious Alexandria. Such extreme changes would falsify all that we know of human nature; we might, *à priori*, pronounce them impossible; and in fact, upon searching history, we find other modes of solving the difficulty. In reality, the citizens of Rome were at this time a new race, brought together from every quarter of the world, but especially from Asia. So vast a proportion of the ancient citizens had been cut off by the sword, and partly to conceal this waste of population, but much more by way of cheaply requiting services, or of showing favor, or of acquiring influence, slaves had been emancipated in such great multitudes, and afterwards invested with all the rights of citizens

that, in a single generation, Rome became almost transmuted into a baser metal; the progeny of those whom the last generation had purchased from the slave merchants. These people derived their stock chiefly from Cappadocia, Pontus, &c., and the other populous regions of Asia Minor; and hence the taint of Asiatic luxury and depravity, which was so conspicuous to all the Romans of the old republican severity. Juvenal is to be understood more literally than is sometimes supposed, when he complains that long before his time the Orontes (that river which washed the infamous capital of Syria) had mingled its impure waters with those of the Tiber. And a little before him, Lucan speaks with mere historic gravity when he says —

————— ‘Vivant Galatæque Syrique
Cappadociæ, Gallique, extremique orbis Iberi,
Armenii, Cilices : *nam post civilia bella*
Hic Populus Romanus erit.’²⁰

Probably in the time of Nero, not one man in six was of pure Roman descent.²¹ And the consequences were suitable. Scarcely a family has come down to our knowledge that could not in one generation enumerate a long catalogue of divorces within its own contracted circle. Every man had married a series of wives, every woman a series of husbands. Even in the palace of Augustus, who wished to be viewed as an *exemplar* or ideal model of domestic purity,

every principal member of his family was tainted in that way ; himself in a manner and a degree infamous even at that time.²² For the first 400 years of Rome, not one divorce had been granted or asked, although the statute which allowed of this indulgence had always been in force. But in the age succeeding to the civil wars, men and women ‘ married,’ says one author, ‘ with a view to divorce, and divorced in order to marry. Many of these changes happened within the year, especially if the lady had a large fortune, which always went with her and procured her choice of transient husbands.’ And, ‘ can one imagine,’ asks the same writer, ‘ that the fair one who changed her husband every quarter, strictly kept her matrimonial faith all the three months?’ Thus the very fountain of all the ‘ household charities’ and household virtues was polluted. And after that we need little wonder at the assassinations, poisonings, and forging of wills, which then laid waste the domestic life of the Romans.

2. A second source of the universal depravity was the growing inefficacy of the public religion ; and this arose from its disproportion and inadequacy to the intellectual advances of the nation. *Religion*, in its very etymology, has been held to imply a *religatio*, that is, a reiterated or secondary obligation of morals ; a sanction supplementary to that of the conscience. Now, for a rude and uncultivated people, the *Pagan*

mythology might not be too gross to discharge the main functions of a useful religion. So long as the understanding could submit to the fables of the Pagan creed, so long it was possible that the hopes and fears built upon that creed might be practically efficient on men's lives and intentions. But when the foundation gave way, the whole superstructure of necessity fell to the ground. Those who were obliged to reject the ridiculous legends which invested the whole of their Pantheon, together with the fabulous adjudgers of future punishments, could not but dismiss the punishments, which were, in fact, as laughable, and as obviously the fictions of human ingenuity, as their dispensers. In short, the civilized part of the world in those days lay in this dreadful condition ; their intellect had far outgrown their religion ; the disproportions between the two were at length become monstrous ; and as yet no purer or more elevated faith was prepared for their acceptance. The case was as shocking as if, with our present intellectual needs, we should be unhappy enough to have no creed on which to rest the burden of our final hopes and fears, of our moral obligations, and of our consolations in misery, except the fairy mythology of our nurses. The condition of a people so situated, of a people under the calamity of having outgrown its religious faith, has never been sufficiently considered. It is probable that such a condition has never existed before or since

that era of the world. The consequences to Rome were — that the reasoning and disputatious part of her population took refuge from the painful state of doubt in Atheism ; amongst the thoughtless and irreflective the consequences were chiefly felt in their **morals**, which were thus sapped in their foundation.

3. A third cause, which from the first had exercised a most baleful influence upon the arts and upon literature in Rome, had by this time matured its disastrous tendencies towards the extinction of the moral sensibilities. This was the circus, and the whole machinery, form and substance, of the Circensian shows. Why had tragedy no existence as a part of the Roman literature ? Because — and *that* was a reason which would have sufficed to stifle all the dramatic genius of Greece and England — there was too much tragedy in the shape of gross reality, almost daily before their eyes. The amphitheatre extinguished the theatre. How was it possible that the fine and intellectual griefs of the drama should win their way to hearts seared and rendered callous by the continual exhibition of scenes the most hideous, in which human blood was poured out like water, and a human life sacrificed at any moment either to caprice in the populace, or to a strife of rivalry between the *ayes* and the *noes*, or as the penalty for any trifling instance of awkwardness in the performer himself ? Even the more innocent exhibitions, in which brutes only were

the sufferers, could not but be mortal to all the finer sensibilities. Five thousand wild animals, torn from their native abodes in the wilderness or forest, were often turned out to be hunted, or for mutual slaughter, in the course of a single exhibition of this nature; and it sometimes happened, (a fact which of itself proclaims the course of the public propensities,) that the person at whose expense the shows were exhibited, by way of paying special court to the people and meriting their favor, in the way most conspicuously open to him, issued orders that all, without a solitary exception, should be slaughtered. He made it known, as the very highest gratification which the case allowed, that (in the language of our modern auctioneers) the whole, ‘without reserve,’ should perish before their eyes. Even such spectacles must have hardened the heart and blunted the more delicate sensibilities; but these would soon cease to stimulate the pampered and exhausted sense. From the combats of tigers or eopards, in which the passions could only be gathered indirectly, and by way of inference from the motions, the transition must have been almost inevitable to those of men, whose nobler and more varied passions spoke directly, and by the intelligible language of the eye, to human spectators; and from the frequent contemplation of these authorized murders, in which a whole people, women²³ as much as men, and children intermingled with both, looked on with leisurely indif-

ference, with anxious expectation, or with rapturous delight, whilst below them were passing the direct sufferings of humanity, and not seldom its dying pangs, it was impossible to expect a result different from that which did in fact take place,—universal hardness of heart, obdurate depravity, and a twofold degradation of human nature, which acted simultaneously upon the two pillars of morality, (which are otherwise not often assailed together,) of natural sensibility in the first place, and in the second, of conscientious principle.

4. But these were circumstances which applied to the whole population indiscriminately. Superadded to these, in the case of the emperor, and affecting *him* exclusively, was this prodigious disadvantage—that ancient reverence for the immediate witnesses of his actions, and for the people and senate who would under other circumstances have exercised the old functions of the censor, was, as to the emperor, pretty nearly obliterated. The very title of *imperator*, from which we have derived our modern one of *emperor*, proclaims the nature of the government, and the tenure of that office. It was purely a government by the sword, or permanent *stratocracy*, having a movable head. Never was there a people who inquired so impertinently as the Romans into the domestic conduct of each private citizen. No rank escaped this jealous vigilance ; and private liberty, even in the

most indifferent circumstances of taste or expense, was sacrificed to this inquisitorial rigor of *surveillance*, exercised on behalf of the state, sometimes by erroneous patriotism, too often by malice in disguise. To this spirit the highest public officers were obliged to bow; the consuls, not less than others. And even the occasional dictator, if by law irresponsible, acted nevertheless as one who knew that any change which depressed his party might eventually abrogate his privilege. For the first time in the person of an imperator was seen a supreme autocrat, who had virtually and effectively all the irresponsibility which the law assigned, and the origin of his office presumed. Satisfied to know that he possessed such power, Augustus, as much from natural taste as policy, was glad to dissemble it, and by every means to withdraw it from public notice. But he had passed his youth as citizen of a republic; and in the state of transition to autocracy, in his office of triumvir, had experimentally known the perils of rivalship, and the pains of foreign control, too feelingly to provoke unnecessarily any sleeping embers of the republican spirit. Tiberius, though familiar from his infancy with the servile homage of a court, was yet modified by the popular temper of Augustus; and he came late to the throne. Caligula was the first prince on whom the entire effect of his political situation was allowed^d to operate; and the natural results were seen — he was the first abso-

lute monster. He must early have seen the realities of his position, and from what quarter it was that any cloud could arise to menace his security. To the senate or people any respect which he might think proper to pay, must have been imputed by all parties to the lingering superstitions of custom, to involuntary habit, to court dissimulation, or to the decencies of external form, and the prescriptive reverence of ancient names. But neither senate nor people could enforce their claims, whatever they might happen to be. Their sanction and ratifying vote might be worth having, as consecrating what was already secure, and conciliating the scruples of the weak to the absolute decision of the strong. But their resistance, as an original movement, was so wholly without hope, that they were never weak enough to threaten it.

The army was the true successor to their places, being the *ultimate* depository of power. Yet, as the army was necessarily subdivided, as the shifting circumstances upon every frontier were continually varying the strength of the several divisions as to numbers and state of discipline, one part might be balanced against the other by an imperator standing in the centre of the whole. The rigor of the military *sacramentum*, or oath of allegiance, made it dangerous to offer the first overtures to rebellion ; and the money, which the soldiers were continually depositing in the bank, placed at the foot of their military standards, if

sometimes turned against the emperor, was also liable to be sequestered in his favor. There were then, in fact, two great forces in the government acting in and by each other — the Stratocracy, and the Autocracy. Each needed the other; each stood in awe of each. But, as regarded all other forces in the empire, constitutional or irregular, popular or senatorial, neither had anything to fear. Under any ordinary circumstances, therefore, considering the hazards of a rebellion, the emperor was substantially liberated from all control. Vexations or outrages upon the populace were not such to the army. It was but rarely that the soldier participated in the emotions of the citizen. And thus, being effectually without check, the most vicious of the Cæsars went on without fear, presuming upon the weakness of one part of his subjects, and the indifference of the other, until he was tempted onwards to atrocities, which armed against him the common feelings of human nature, and all mankind, as it were, rose in a body with one voice, and apparently with one heart, united by mere force of indignant sympathy, to put him down, and ‘abate’ him as a monster. But, until he brought matters to this extremity, Cæsar had no cause to fear. Nor was it at all certain, in any one instance, where this exemplary chastisement overtook him, that the apparent unanimity of the actors went further than the *practical* conclusion of ‘abating

the imperial nuisance, or that their indignation had settled upon the same offences. In general, the army measured the guilt by the public scandal, rather than by its moral atrocity ; and Cæsar suffered perhaps in every case, not so much because he had violated his duties, as because he had dishonored his office.

It is, therefore, in the total absence of the checks which have almost universally existed to control other despots, under some indirect shape, even where none was provided by the laws, that we must seek for the main peculiarity affecting the condition of the Roman Cæsar, which peculiarity it was, superadded to the other three, that finally made those three operative in their fullest extent. It is in the perfection of the stratocracy that we must look for the key to the excesses of the autocrat. Even in the bloody despotisms of the Barbary States, there has always existed in the religious prejudices of the people, which could not be violated with safety, one check more upon the caprices of the despot than was found at Rome. Upon the whole, therefore, what affects us on the first reading as a prodigy or anomaly in the frantic outrages of the early Cæsars — falls within the natural bounds of intelligible human nature, when we state the case considerately. Surrounded by a population which had not only gone through a most vicious and corrupting discipline, and had been utterly ruined by the license of revolutionary times, and the

bloodiest proscriptions, but had even been extensively changed in its very elements, and from the descendants of Romulus had been transmuted into an Asiatic mob: — starting from this point, and considering as the second feature of the case, that this transfigured people, *morally* so degenerate, were carried, however, by the progress of civilization, to a certain intellectual altitude, which the popular religion had not strength to ascend — but from inherent disproportion remained at the base of the general civilization, incapable of accompanying the other elements in their advance; — thirdly, that this polished condition of society, which should naturally with the evils of a luxurious repose have counted upon its pacific benefits, had yet, by means of its circus and its gladiatorial contests, applied a constant irritation, and a system of provocations to the appetites for blood, such as in all other nations are connected with the rudest stages of society, and with the most barbarous modes of warfare, nor even in such circumstances, without many palliatives wanting to the spectators of the circus; — combining these considerations, we have already a key to the enormities and hideous excesses of the Roman Imperator. The love of blood which excites, and the adventurous courage which accompanies, the excesses of sanguinary warfare, presuppose a condition of the moral nature not to be compared for malignity and baleful tendency to the soul and cowardly spirit of amateurishness, in which the

Roman (perhaps an effeminate Asiatic) sat looking down upon the bravest of men, (Thracians or other Europeans,) mangling each other for his recreation. When, lastly, from such a population, and thus disciplined from his nursery days, we suppose the case of one individual selected, privileged, and raised to a conscious irresponsibility, except at the bar of one extra-judicial tribunal, not easily irritated, and notoriously to be propitiated by other means than those of upright or impartial conduct, we lay together the elements of a situation too trying for poor human nature, and fitted only to the faculties of an angel or a demon; of an angel, if we suppose him to resist its full temptations; of a demon, if we suppose him to use its total opportunities. Thus interpreted and solved, Caligula and Nero become ordinary men.

But, finally, what if, after all, the worst of the Cæsars, and those in particular, were entitled to the benefit of a still shorter and more conclusive apology? What if, in a true medical sense, they were insane? It is certain that a vein of madness ran in the family; and anecdotes are recorded of the three worst, which go far to establish it as a fact, and others which would imply it as symptoms — preceding or accompanying. As belonging to the former class, take the following story: At midnight an elderly gentleman suddenly sends round a message to a select party of noblemen, rouses them out of bed, and summons them instantly.

to his palace. Trembling for their lives from the suddenness of the summons, and from the unseasonable hour, and scarcely doubting that by some anonymous *delator* they have been implicated as parties to a conspiracy, they hurry to the palace— are received in portentous silence by the ushers and pages in attendance— are conducted to a saloon, where (as in everywhere else) the silence of night prevails, united with the silence of fear and whispering expectation. All are seated—all look at each other in ominous anxiety. Which is accuser? Which is the accused? On whom shall their suspicions settle—on whom their pity? All are silent—almost speechless—and even the current of their thoughts is frost-bound by fear. Suddenly the sound of a fiddle or a viol is caught from a distance—it swells upon the ear—steps approach—and in another moment in rushes the elderly gentleman, grave and gloomy as his audience, but capering about in a frenzy of excitement. For half an hour he continues to perform all possible evolutions of caprioles, pirouettes, and other extravagant feats of activity, accompanying himself on the fiddle; and, at length, not having once looked at his guests, the elderly gentleman whirls out of the room in the same transport of emotion with which he entered it; the panic-struck visitors are requested by a slave to consider themselves as dismissed: they retire resume their couches:—

the nocturnal pageant has ‘dislimned’ and vanished; and on the following morning, were it not for their concurring testimonies, all would be disposed to take this interruption of their sleep for one of its most fantastic dreams. The elderly gentleman who figured in this delirious *pas seul* — who was he? He was Tiberius Cæsar, king of kings, and lord of the terraqueous globe. Would a British jury demand better evidence than this of a disturbed intellect in any formal process *de lunatico inquirendo*? For Caligula, again, the evidence of symptoms is still plainer. He knew his own defect; and proposed going through a course of hellebore. Sleeplessness, one of the commonest indications of lunacy, haunted him in an excess rarely recorded.²⁴ The same, or similar facts, might be brought forward on behalf of Nero. And thus these unfortunate princes, who have so long (and with so little investigation of their cases) passed for monsters or for demoniac counterfeits of men, would at length be brought back within the fold of humanity, as objects rather of pity than of abhorrence, would be reconciled to our indulgent feelings and, at the same time, made intelligible to our understandings.

CHAPTER IV.

THE five Cæsars²⁵ who succeeded immediately to the first twelve, were, in as high a sense as their office allowed, patriots. Hadrian is perhaps the first of all whom circumstances permitted to show his patriotism without fear. It illustrates at one and the same moment a trait in this emperor's character, and in the Roman habits, that he acquired much reputation for hardness by walking bareheaded. ‘Never, on any occasion,’ says one of his mémorialists (Dio), ‘neither in summer heat nor in winter’s cold, did he cover his head; but, as well in the Celtic snows as in Egyptian heats, he went about bareheaded.’ This anecdote could not fail to win the especial admiration of Isaac Casaubon, who lived in an age when men believed a hat no less indispensable to the head, even within doors, than shoes or stockings to the feet. His astonishment on the occasion is thus expressed: ‘Tantum
τούτη ἡ πατέσιος:’ such and so mighty is the force of habit and daily use. And then he goes on to ask—‘Quis hodie nudum caput radiis solis, aut omnia perurenti frigori, ausit exponere?’ Yet we ourselves and our illustrious friend, Christopher North, have walked for twenty years amongst our British lakes and mountains

hatless, and amidst both snow and rain, such as Romans did not often experience. We were naked, and yet not ashamed. Nor in this are we altogether singular. But, says Casaubon, the Romans went farther; for they walked about the streets of Rome²⁶ bare-headed, and never assumed a hat or a cap, a *petasus* or a *galerus*, a Macedonian *causia*, or a *pileus*, whether Thessalian, Arcadian or Laconic, unless when they entered upon a journey. Nay, some there were, as Masinissa and Julius Cæsar, who declined even on such an occasion to cover their heads. Perhaps in imitation of these celebrated leaders, Hadrian adopted the same practice, but not with the same result; for to him, either from age or constitution, this very custom proved the original occasion of his last illness.

Imitation, indeed, was a general principle of action with Hadrian, and the key to much of his public conduct; and allowably enough, considering the exemplary lives (in a public sense) of some who had preceded him, and the singular anxiety with which he distinguished between the lights and shadows of their examples. He imitated the great Dictator, Julius, in his vigilance of inspection into the civil, not less than the martial police of his times, shaping his new regulations to meet abuses as they arose, and strenuously maintaining the old ones in vigorous operation. A respected the army, this was matter of peculiar praise because peculiarly disinterested; for his foreign polic-

was pacific ;²⁷ he made no new conquests : and he retired from the old ones of Trojan, where they could not have been maintained without disproportionate bloodshed, or a jealousy beyond the value of the stake. In this point of his administration he took Augustus for his model ; as again in his care of the army, in his occasional bounties, and in his paternal solicitude for their comforts, he looked rather to the example of Julius. Him also he imitated in his affability and in his ambitious courtesies ; one instance of which, as blending an artifice of political subtlety and simulation with a remarkable exertion of memory, it may be well to mention. The custom was, in canvassing the citizens of Rome, that the candidate should address every voter by his name ; it was a fiction of republican etiquette, that every man participating in the political privileges of the State must be personally known to public aspirants. But, as this was supposed to be, in a literal sense, impossible to all men with the ordinary endowments of memory, in order to reconcile the pretensions of republican hauteur with the necessities of human weakness, a custom had grown up of relying upon a class of men called *nomen-lators*, whose express business and profession it was to make themselves acquainted with the person and name of every citizen. One of these people accompanied every candidate, and quietly whispered into his ear the name of each voter as he came in sight. Few, indeed, were they who

ould dispense with the services of such an assessor; for the office imposed a twofold memory, that of names and of persons; and to estimate the immensity of the effort, we must recollect that the number of voters often far exceed one quarter of a million. The very same trial of memory he undertook with respect to his own army, in this instance recalling the well known feat of Mithridates. And throughout his life he did not once forget the face or name of any veteran soldier whom he had ever occasion to notice, no matter under what remote climate, or under what difference of circumstances. Wonderful is the effect upon soldiers of such enduring and separate remembrance, which operates always as the most touching kind of personal flattery, and which, in every age of the world, since the social sensibilities of men have been much developed, military commanders are found to have played upon as the most effectual chord in the great system which they modulated; some few, by a rare endowment of nature; others, as Napoleon Bonaparte, by elaborate mimicries of pantomimic art.²⁸

Other modes he had of winning affection from the army; in particular that, so often practised before and since, of accommodating himself to the strictest ritual of martial discipline and castrenian life. He slept in the open air, or, if he used a tent (*papilio*), it was open at the sides. He ate the ordinary rations of cheese, bacon, &c.; he used no other drink than that

composition of vinegar and water, known by the name of *posca*, which formed the sole beverage allowed in the Roman camps. He joined personally in the periodical exercises of the army — those even which were trying to the most vigorous youth and health : marching, for example, on stated occasions, twenty English miles without intermission, in full armor and completely accoutred. Luxury of every kind he not only interdicted to the soldier by severe ordinances, himself enforcing their execution, but discountenanced it (though elsewhere splendid and even gorgeous in his personal habits) by his own continual example. In dress, for instance, he sternly banished the purple and gold embroideries, the jewelled arms, and the floating draperies, so little in accordance with the severe character of '*war in procinct.*'²⁹ Hardly would he allow himself an ivory hilt to his sabre. The same severe proscription he extended to every sort of furniture, or decorations of art, which sheltered even in the bosom of camps those habits of effeminate luxury — so apt in all great empires to steal by imperceptible steps from the voluptuous palace to the soldier's tent — following in the equipage of great leading officers, or of subalterns highly connected. There was at that time a practice prevailing, in the great standing camps on the several frontiers and at all the military stations, of renewing as much as possible the image of distant Rome by the erection of long colonnades and piazzas —

single, double, or triple ; of crypts, or subterranean ³⁰ saloons, (and sometimes subterranean galleries and corridors,) for evading the sultry noontides of July and August ; of verdant cloisters or arcades, with roofs high over-arched, constructed entirely out of flexible shrubs, box-myrtle, and others, trained and trimmed in regular forms ; besides endless other applications of the *topiary*³¹ art, which in those days (like the needlework of Miss Linwood³² in ours), though no more than a mechanic craft, in some measure realized the effects of a fine art by the perfect skill of its execution. All these modes of luxury, with a policy that had the more merit as it thwarted his own private inclinations, did Hadrian peremptorily abolish ; perhaps amongst other more obvious purposes, seeking to intercept the earliest buddings of those local attachments which are as injurious to the martial character and the proper pursuits of men whose vocation obliges them to consider themselves eternally under marching orders, as they are propitious to all the best interests of society in connection with the feelings of civic life.

We dwell upon this prince not without reason in this particular ; for, amongst the Cæsars, Hadrian stands forward in high relief as a reformer of the army. Well and truly might it be said of him — that, *post Cæsarem Octavianum labantem disciplinam, incuria superiorum principum, ipse retinuit.* Not content with the cleansing and purgations we have mentioned,

he placed upon a new footing the whole tenure, duties, and pledges of military offices.³³ It cannot much surprise us that this department of the public service should gradually have gone to ruin or decay. Under the senate and people, under the auspices of those awful symbols — letters more significant and ominous than ever before had troubled the eyes of man, except upon Belshazzar's wall — S. P. Q. R., the officers of the Roman army had been kept true to their duties, and vigilant by emulation and a healthy ambition. But, when the ripeness of corruption had by dissolving the body of the State brought out of its ashes a new mode of life, and had recast the aristocratic republic, by aid of its democratic elements then suddenly victorious, into a pure autocracy — whatever might be the advantages in other respects of this great change, in one point it had certainly injured the public service, by throwing the higher military appointments, all in fact which conferred any authority, into the channels of court favor — and by consequence into a mercenary disposal. Each successive emperor had been too anxious for his own immediate security, to find leisure for the remoter interests of the empire: all looked to the army, as it were, for their own immediate security against competitors, without venturing to tamper with its constitution, to risk popularity by reforming abuses, to balance present interest against a remote one, or to cultivate the public welfare at the hazard of their own

contented with obtaining *that*, they left the internal arrangements of so formidable a body in the state to which circumstances had brought it, and to which naturally the views of all existing beneficiaries had gradually adjusted themselves. What these might be, and to what further results they might tend, was a matter of moment doubtless to the empire. But the empire was strong ; if its motive energy was decaying, its *vis inertiae* was for ages enormous, and could stand up against assaults repeated for many ages : whilst the emperor was in the beginning of his authority weak, and pledged by instant interest, no less than by express promises, to the support of that body whose favor had substantially supported himself. Hadrian was the first who turned his attention effectually in that direction ; whether it were that he first was struck with the tendency of the abuses, or that he valued the hazard less which he incurred in correcting them, or that having no successor of his own blood, he had a less personal and affecting interest at stake in setting this hazard at defiance. Hitherto, the highest regimental rank, that of tribune, had been disposed of in two ways, either civilly upon popular favor and election, or upon the express recommendation of the soldiery. This custom had prevailed under the republic, and the force of habit had availed to propagate that practice under a new mode of government. But now were introduced new regulations : the tribune was selected for his mili-

rary qualities and experience : none was appointed to this important office, ‘*nisi barbâ plenâ*.’ The centurion’s truncheon,³⁴ again, was given to no man, ‘*nisi robusto et bonæ famæ*.’ The arms and military appointments (*supellectilis*) were revised ; the register of names was duly called over ; and none suffered to remain in the camps who was either above or below the military age. The same vigilance and jealousy were extended to the great stationary stores and repositories of biscuit, vinegar, and other equipments for the soldiery. All things were in constant readiness in the capital and the provinces, in the garrisons and camps, abroad and at home, to meet the outbreak of a foreign war or a domestic sedition. Whatever were the service, it could by no possibility find Hadrian unprepared. And he first, in fact, of all the Cæsars, restored to its ancient republican standard, as reformed and perfected by Marius, the old martial discipline of the Scipios and the Paulli — that discipline, to which, more than to any physical superiority of her soldiery, Rome had been indebted for her conquest of the earth ; and which had inevitably decayed in the long series of wars growing out of personal ambition. From the days of Marius, every great leader had sacrificed to the necessities of courting favor from the troops, as much as was possible of the hardships incident to actual service, and as much as he dared of the once rigorous discipline. Hadrian first found himself in circumstances, or was the first

who had courage enough to decline a momentary interest in favor of a greater in reversion ; and a personal object which was transient, in favor of a State one continually revolving.

For a prince, with no children of his own, it is in any case a task of peculiar delicacy to select a successor. In the Roman empire the difficulties were much aggravated. The interests of the State were, in the first place, to be consulted ; for a mighty burthen of responsibility rested upon the emperor in the most personal sense. Duties of every kind fell to his station, which, from the peculiar constitution of the government, and from circumstances rooted in the very origin of the imperatorial office, could not be devolved upon a council. Council there was none, nor could be recognized as such in the State machinery. The emperor, himself a sacred and sequestered creature, might be supposed to enjoy the secret tutelage of the Supreme Deity ; but a council, composed of subordinate and responsible agents, could *not*. Again, the auspices of the emperor, and his edicts, apart even from any celestial or supernatural inspiration, simply as emanations of his own divine character, had a value and a consecration which could never belong to those of a council — or to those even which had been sullied by the breath of any less august reviser. The emperor therefore, or — as with a view to his solitary and unique character we ought to call him — in the origina-

irrepresentable term, the imperator, could not delegate his duties, or execute them in any avowed form by proxies or representatives. He was himself the great fountain of law — of honor — of preferment — of civil and political regulations. He was the fountain also of good and evil fame. He was the great chancellor, or supreme dispenser of equity to all climates, nations, languages, of his mighty dominions, which connected the turbaned races of the Orient, and those who sat in the gates of the rising sun, with the islands of the West, and the unfathomed depths of the mysterious Scandinavia. He was the universal guardian of the public and private interests which composed the great edifice of the social system as then existing amongst his subjects. Above all, and out of his own private purse, he supported the heraldries of his dominions — the peerage, senatorial or prætorian, and the great gentry or chivalry of the Equites. These were classes who would have been dishonored by the censorship of a less august comptroller. And for the classes below these, — by how much they were lower and more remote from his ocular superintendence, — by so much the more were they linked to him in a connection of absolute dependence. Cæsar it was who provided their daily food, Cæsar who provided their pleasures and relaxations. He chartered the fleets which brought grain to the Tiber — he bespoke the Sardinian granaries while yet unformed — and the

harvests of the Nile while yet unsown. Not the connection between a mother and her unborn infant is more intimate and vital, than that which subsisted between the mighty populace of the Roman capitol and their paternal emperor. They drew their nutriment from him ; they lived and were happy by sympathy with the motions of his will ; to him also the arts, the knowledge, and the literature of the empire looked for support. To him the armies looked for their laurels, and the eagles in every clime turned their aspiring eyes, waiting to bend their flight according to the signal of his Jovian nod. And all these vast functions and ministrations arose partly as a natural effect, but partly also they were a cause of the emperor's own divinity. He was capable of services so exalted, because he also was held a god, and had his own altars, his own incense, his own worship and priests. And that was the cause, and that was the result of his bearing, on his own shoulders, a burthen so mighty and Atlantean.

Yet, if in this view it was needful to have a man of talent, on the other hand there was reason to dread a man of talents too adventurous, too aspiring, or too intriguing. His situation, as Cæsar, or Crown Prince, flung into his hands a power of fomenting conspiracies, and of concealing them until the very moment of explosion, which made him an object of almost exclusive terror to his principal, the Cæsar

Augustus. His situation again, as an heir voluntarily adopted, made him the proper object of public affection and caresses, which became peculiarly embarrassing to one who had, perhaps, soon found reasons for suspecting, fearing, and hating him beyond all other men.

The young nobleman, whom Hadrian adopted by his earliest choice, was Lucius Aurelius Verus, the son of Cejonius Commodus. These names were borne also by the son ; but, after his adoption into the *Ælian* family, he was generally known by the appellation of *Ælius Verus*. The scandal of those times imputed his adoption to the worst motives. ‘*Adriano*,’ says one author, ‘(*ut malevoli loquuntur*) *acceptior formâ quam moribus*.’ And thus much undoubtedly there is to countenance so shocking an insinuation, that very little is recorded of the young prince but such anecdotes as illustrate his excessive luxury and effeminate dedication to pleasure. Still it is our private opinion, that Hadrian’s real motives have been misrepresented ; that he sought in the young man’s extraordinary beauty — [for he was, says Spartian, *pulchritudinis regiae*] — a plausible pretext that should be sufficient to explain and to countenance his preference, whilst under his provisional adoption he was enabled to postpone the definitive choice of an imperator elect, until his own more advanced age might diminish the motives for intriguing against himself. It was, therefore, a mere *ad interim* adoption ; for it is certain, however we

may choose to explain that fact, that Hadrian foresaw and calculated on the early death of Aelius. This prophetic knowledge may have been grounded on a private familiarity with some constitutional infirmity affecting his daily health, or with some habits of life incompatible with longevity, or with both combined. It is pretended that this distinguished mark of favor was conferred in fulfilment of a direct contract on the emperor's part, as the price of favors, such as the Latin reader will easily understand from the strong expression of Spartian above cited. But it is far more probable that Hadrian relied on this admirable beauty, and allowed it so much weight, as the readiest and most intelligible justification to the multitude, of a choice which thus offered to their homage a public favorite — and to the nobility, of so invidious a preference, which placed one of their own number far above the level of his natural rivals. The necessities of the moment were thus satisfied without present or future danger; — as respected the future, he knew or believed that Verus was marked out for early death; and would often say, in a strain of compliment somewhat disproportionate, applying to him the Virgilian lines on the hopeful and lamented Marcellus,

‘Ostendit terris hunc tantum fata, neque ultra
Esse sinent.’

And, at the same time, to countenance the belief that he had been disappointed, he would affect to sigh,

exclaiming — ‘ Ah ! that I should thus fruitlessly have squandered a sum of three³⁵ millions sterling ! ’ for so much had been distributed in largesses to the people and the army on the occasion of his inauguration. Meantime, as respected the present, the qualities of the young man were amply fitted to sustain a Roman popularity ; for, in addition to his extreme and statuesque beauty of person, he was (in the report of one who did not wish to color his character advantageously) ‘ *memor familiæ suæ, comptus, decorus, oris venerandi, eloquentiæ celsioris, versu facilis, in republicâ etiam non inutilis.* ’ Even as a military officer, he had a respectable³⁶ character ; as an orator he was more than respectable ; and in other qualifications less interesting to the populace, he had that happy mediocrity of merit which was best fitted for his delicate and difficult situation — sufficient to do credit to the emperor’s preference — sufficient to sustain the popular regard, but not brilliant enough to throw his patron into the shade. For the rest his vices were of a nature not greatly or necessarily to interfere with his public duties, and emphatically such as met with the readiest indulgence from the Roman laxity of morals. Some few instances, indeed, are noticed of cruelty : but there is reason to think that it was merely by accident, and as an indirect result of other purposes, that he ever allowed himself in such manifestations of irresponsible power — not as gratifying any harsh impulses of his

native character. The most remarkable neglect of humanity with which he has been taxed, occurred in the treatment of his couriers; these were the bearers of news and official dispatches, at that time fulfilling the functions of the modern post; and it must be remembered that as yet they were not slaves, (as afterwards by the reformation of Alexander Severus,) but free citizens. They had been already dressed in a particular livery or uniform, and possibly they might wear some symbolical badges of their profession; but the new Cæsar chose to dress them altogether in character as winged Cupids, affixing literal wings to their shoulders, and facetiously distinguishing them by the names of the four cardinal winds, (Boreas, Aquilo, Notus, &c.) and others as levanters or hurricanes, (Circius, &c.) Thus far he did no more than indulge a blameless fancy; but in his anxiety that his runners should emulate their patron winds, and do credit to the names which he had assigned them, he is said to have exacted a degree of speed inconsistent with any merciful regard for their bodily powers.²⁷ But these were, after all, perhaps, mere improvements of malice upon some solitary incident. The true stain upon his memory, and one which is open to no doubt whatever, is excessive and extravagant luxury—excessive in degree, extravagant and even ludicrous in its forms. For example, he constructed a sort of bed or sofa—protected from insects by an awning of net

work composed of lilies, delicately fabricated into the proper meshes, &c., and the couches composed wholly of rose-leaves; and even of these, not without an exquisite preparation; for the white parts of the leaves, as coarser and harsher to the touch, (possibly, also, as less odorous,) were scrupulously rejected. Here he lay indolently stretched amongst favorite ladies,

‘And like a naked Indian slept himself away.’

He had also tables composed of the same delicate material — prepared and purified in the same elaborate way — and to these were adapted seats in the fashion of sofas (*accubationes*), corresponding in their materials, and in their mode of preparation. He was also an expert performer, and even an original inventor, in the art of cookery; and one dish of his discovery, which, from its four component parts, obtained the name of *tetrapharmacum*, was so far from owing its celebrity to its royal birth, that it maintained its place on Hadrian’s table to the time of his death. These, however, were mere fopperies or pardonable extravagances in one so young and so exalted; ‘quæ, etsi non decora,’ as the historian observes, ‘non tamen ad perniciem publicam prompta sunt.’ A graver mode of licentiousness appeared in his connections with women. He made no secret of his lawless amours; and to his own wife, on her expostulating with him on his aberrations in this respect, he replied — that ‘wife’ was a designation of rank and official dignity, not of

tenderness and affection, or implying any claim of love on either side; upon which distinction he begged that she would mind her own affairs, and leave him to pursue such as he might himself be involved in by his sensibility to female charms.

However, he and all his errors, his ‘regal beauty,’ his princely pomps, and his authorized hopes, were suddenly swallowed up by the inexorable grave; and he would have passed away like an exhalation, and leaving no remembrance of himself more durable than his own beds of rose-leaves, and his reticulated canopies of lilies, had it not been that Hadrian filled the world with images of his perfect fawn-like beauty in the shape of colossal statues, and raised temples even to his memory in various cities. This Cæsar, therefore, dying thus prematurely, never tasted of empire; and his name would have had but a doubtful title to a place in the imperatorial roll, had it not been recalled to a second chance for the sacred honors in the person of his son — whom it was the pleasure of Hadrian, by way of testifying his affection for the father, to associate in the order of succession with the philosophic Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. This fact, and the certainty that to the second Ælius Verus he gave his own daughter in marriage, rather than to his associate Cæsar Marcus Aurelius, make it evident that his regret for the elder Verus was unaffected and deep; and they overthrow effectually the common report of historians — that he

repented of his earliest choice, as of one that had been disappointed not by the decrees of fate, but by the violent defect of merit in its object. On the contrary, he prefaced his inauguration of this junior Cæsar by the following tender words — Let us confound the rapine of the grave, and let the empire possess amongst her rulers a second Ælius Verus.

‘ *Diis aliter visum est :*’ the blood of the Ælian family was not privileged to ascend or aspire: it gravitated violently to extinction; and this junior Verus is supposed to have been as much indebted to his assessor on the throne for shielding his obscure vices, and drawing over his defects the ample draperies of the imperial robe, as he was to Hadrian, his grandfather by fiction of law, for his adoption into the reigning family, and his consecration as one of the Cæsars. He, says one historian, shed no ray of light or illustration upon the imperial house, except by one solitary quality. This bears a harsh sound; but it has the effect of a sudden redemption for his memory, when we learn — that this solitary quality, in virtue of which he claimed a natural affinity to the sacred house, and challenged a natural interest in the purple, was the very princely one of — a merciful disposition.

The two Antonines fix an era in the imperial history; for they were both eminent models of wise and good rulers; and some would say, that they fixed a crisis; for with their successor commenced, in the popular

belief, the decline of the empire. That at least is the doctrine of Gibbon; but perhaps it would not be found altogether able to sustain itself against a closer and philosophic examination of the true elements involved in the idea of declension as applied to political bodies. Be that as it may, however, and waiving any interest which might happen to invest the Antonines as the last princes who kept up the empire to its original level, both of them had enough of merit to challenge a separate notice in their personal characters, and apart from the accidents of their position.

The elder of the two, who is usually distinguished by the title of *Pius*, is thus described by one of his biographers: — ‘He was externally of remarkable beauty; eminent for his moral character, full of benign dispositions, noble, with a countenance of a most gentle expression, intellectually of singular endowments, possessing an elegant style of eloquence, distinguished for his literature, generally temperate, an earnest lover of agricultural pursuits, mild in his deportment, bountiful in the use of his own, but a stern respecter of the rights of others; and, finally, he was all this without ostentation, and with a constant regard to the proportions of cases, and to the demands of time and place.’ His bounty displayed itself in a way, which may be worth mentioning, as at once illustrating the age, and the prudence with which he controlled the most generous of his impulses: — ‘*Fænus trientarium*,’³⁸ says the

historian, ‘*hoc est minimis usuris exercuit, ut matrimonio suo plurimos adjuvaret.*’ The meaning of which is this: — In Rome, the customary interest for money was what was called *centesimæ usuræ*; that is, the hundredth part, or one per cent. But, as this expressed not the annual, but the *monthly* interest, the true rate was, in fact, twelve per cent.; and that is the meaning of *centesimæ usuræ*. Nor could money be obtained anywhere on better terms than these; and, moreover, this one per cent. was exacted rigorously as the monthly day came round, no arrears being suffered to lie over. Under these circumstances, it was a prodigious service to lend money at a diminished rate, and one which furnished many men with the means of saving themselves from ruin. Pius, then, by way of extending his aid as far as possible, reduced the monthly rate of his loans to one-third per cent., which made the annual interest the very moderate one of four per cent. The channels, which public spirit had as yet opened to the beneficence of the opulent, were few indeed: charity and munificence languished, or they were abused, or they were inefficiently directed, simply through defects in the structure of society. Social organization, for its large development, demanded the agency of newspapers, (together with many other forms of assistance from the press,) of banks, of public carriages on an extensive scale, besides infinite other inventions or establishments not yet created — which

support and powerfully re-act upon that same progress of society which originally gave birth to themselves. All things considered, in the Rome of that day, where all munificence confined itself to the direct largesses of a few leading necessities of life, — a great step was taken, and the best step, in this lending of money at a low interest, towards a more refined and beneficial mode of charity.

In his public character, he was perhaps the most patriotic of Roman emperors, and the purest from all taint of corrupt or indirect ends. Peculation, embezzlement or misapplication of the public funds, were universally corrected ; provincial oppressors were exposed and defeated : the taxes and tributes were diminished ; and the public expenses were thrown as much as possible upon the public estates, and in some instances upon his own private estates. So far, indeed, did Pius stretch his sympathy with the poorer classes of his subjects, that on this account chiefly he resided permanently in the capital — alleging in excuse, partly that he thus stationed himself in the very centre of his mighty empire, to which all couriers could come by the shortest radii, but chiefly that he thus spared the provincialists those burdens which must else have alighted upon them ; ‘for,’ said he, ‘even the slenderest retinue of a Roman emperor is burthensome to the whole line of its progress.’ His tenderness and consideration, indeed, were extended to all classes, and

all relations of his subjects ; even to those who stood in the shadow of his public displeasure as State delinquents, or as the most atrocious criminals. To the children of great treasury defaulters, he returned the confiscated estates of their fathers, deducting only what might repair the public loss. And so resolutely did he refuse to shed the blood of any in the senatorial order, to whom he conceived himself more especially bound in paternal ties, that even a parricide, whom the laws would not suffer to live, was simply exposed upon a desert island.

Little, indeed, did Pius want of being a perfect Christian, in heart and in practice. Yet all this display of goodness and merciful indulgence, nay, all his munificence, would have availed him little with the people at large, had he neglected to furnish shows and exhibitions in the arena of suitable magnificence. Luckily for his reputation, he exceeded the general standard of imperial splendor not less as the patron of the amphitheatre than in his more important functions. It is recorded of him — that in one *missio* he sent forward on the arena a hundred lions. Nor was he less distinguished by the rarity of the wild animals which he exhibited than by their number. There were elephants, there were crocodiles, there were hippopotami at one time upon the stage : there was also the rhinoceros, and the still rarer *crocuta* or *corocotta*, with a few *strepisikotes*. Some of these were matched in duels, some in

general battles with tigers ; in fact, there was no species of wild animal throughout the deserts and sandy Zaarras of Africa, the infinite *steppes* of Asia, or the lawny recesses and dim forests of then sylvan Europe,³⁹ no species known to natural history, (and some even of which naturalists have lost sight,) which the Emperor Pius did not produce to his Roman subjects on his ceremonious pomps. And in another point he carried his splendors to a point which set the seal to his liberality. In the phrase of modern auctioneers, he gave up the wild beasts to slaughter ‘without reserve.’ It was the custom, in ordinary cases, so far to consider the enormous cost of these far-fetched rarities as to preserve for future occasions those which escaped the arrows of the populace, or survived the bloody combats in which they were engaged. Thus, out of the overflowings of one great exhibition, would be found materials for another. But Pius would not allow of these reservations. All were given up unreservedly to the savage purposes of the spectators; land and sea were ransacked; the sanctuaries of the torrid zone were violated ; columns of the army were put in motion—and all for the transient effect of crowning an extra hour with hecatombs of forest blood, each separate minute of which had cost a king’s ransom.

Yet these displays were alien to the nature of Pius : and even through the tyranny of custom, he had been so little changed, that to the last he continued to turn

aside, as often as the public ritual of his duty allowed him, from these fierce spectacles to the gentler amusements of fishing and hunting. His taste and his affections naturally carried him to all domestic pleasures of a quiet nature. A walk in a shrubbery or along a piazza, enlivened with the conversation of a friend or two, pleased him better than all the court festivals; and among festivals or anniversary celebrations, he preferred those which, like the harvest-home or feast of the vintagers, whilst they sanctioned a total carelessness and dismissal of public anxieties, were at the same time colored by the innocent gayety which belongs to rural and to primitive manners. In person, this emperor was tall and dignified (*staturâ elevatâ decorus*); but latterly he stooped; to remedy which defect, that he might discharge his public part with the more decorum, he wore stays.⁴⁰ Of his other personal habits little is recorded, except that, early in the morning and just before receiving the compliments of his friends and dependents (*salutatores*), or what in modern phrase would be called his *levee*, he took a little plain bread (*panem siccum comedit*), that is, bread without condiments or accompaniments of any kind, by way of breakfast. In no meal has luxury advanced more upon the model of the ancients than in this; the dinners (*cænae*) of the Romans were even more luxurious, and a thousand times more costly, than our own; but their breakfasts were scandalously

meagre; and, with many men, breakfast was no professed meal at all. Galen tells us that a little bread, and at most a little seasoning of oil, honey, or dried fruits, was the utmost breakfast which men generally allowed themselves: some indeed drank wine after it, but this was far from being a common practice.⁴¹

The Emperor Pius died in his seventieth year. The immediate occasion of his death was — not breakfast nor *cæna*, but something of the kind. He had received a present of Alpine cheese, and he ordered some for supper. The trap for his life was baited with toasted cheese. There is no reason to think that he ate immoderately; but that night he was seized with indigestion. Delirium followed; during which it is singular that his mind teemed with a class of imagery and of passions the most remote (as it might have been thought) from the voluntary occupations of his thoughts. He raved about the State, and about those kings with whom he was displeased; nor were his thoughts one moment removed from the public service. Yet he was the least ambitious of princes, and his reign was emphatically said to be bloodless. Finding his fever increase, he became sensible that he was dying; and he ordered the golden statue of Prosperity, a household symbol of empire, to be transferred from his own bedroom to that of his successor. Once again, however, for the last time, he gave the word to the officer of the guard; and, soon after, turning away his face to the

wall against which his bed was placed, he passed out of life in the very gentlest sleep, ‘*quasi dormiret, spiritum reddidit*;’ or, as a Greek author expresses it, *κατ’ ισὸν ὑπνῷ τῷ μαλακωτάτῳ*. He was one of those few Roman Emperors whom posterity truly honored with the title of *ἀναιμάτος* (or bloodless); *solusque omnium propè principum prorsus sine civili sanguine et hostili vixit*. In the whole tenor of his life and character he was thought to resemble Numa. And Pausanias, after remarking on his title of *Εὐσεβὺς* (or Pius), upon the meaning and origin of which there are several different hypotheses, closes with this memorable tribute to his paternal qualities — *δοξῆ δὲ ἐμῆ, καὶ τὸ ὄνομα τὸ τοῦ Κύρου φέροιτο ἀν τοῦ πρεσβυτέρου, Πατὴρ ἀνθρώπων καλουμένος*: *but, in my opinion, he should also bear the name of Cyrus the elder — being hailed as Father of the Human Race.*

A thoughtful Roman would have been apt to exclaim, *This is too good to last*, upon finding so admirable a ruler succeeded by one still more admirable in the person of Marcus Aurelius. From the first dawn of his infancy, this prince indicated, by his grave deportment, the philosophic character of his mind; and at eleven years of age he professed himself a formal devotee of philosophy in its strictest form, — assuming the garb, and submitting to its most ascetic ordinances. In particular, he slept upon the ground, and in other respects he practised a style of living the most simple and remote from the habits of rich men [or, in his

own words, τὸ λιτὸν κατὰ τὴν διάταρ, καὶ πολὺών τῆς πλονού-
κηίς ἀγωγής]; though it is true that he himself ascribes
this simplicity of life to the influence of his mother
and not to the premature assumption of the stoical
character. He pushed his austerities indeed to excess;
for Dio mentions that in his boyish days he was re-
duced to great weakness by exercises too severe, and a
diet of too little nutriment. In fact, his whole heart
was set upon philosophic attainments, and perhaps upon
philosophic glory. All the great philosophers of his
own time, whether Stoic or Peripatetic, and amongst
them Sextus of Cheronæa, a nephew of Plutarch, were
retained as his instructors. There was none whom he
did not enrich; and as many as were fitted by birth
and manners to fill important situations, he raised to
the highest offices in the State.⁴² Philosophy, however,
did not so much absorb his affections, but that he found
time to cultivate the fine arts (painting he both studied
and practised), and such gymnastic exercises as he
held consistent with his public dignity. Wrestling,
hunting, fowling, playing at cricket (*pila*), he admired
and patronized by personal participation. He tried his
powers even as a runner. But with these tasks, and
entering so critically, both as a connoisseur and as a
practising amateur, into such trials of skill, so little did
he relish the very same spectacles when connected
with the cruel exhibitions of the circus and amphithe-
atre, that it was not without some friendly violence on

the part of those who could venture on such a liberty, nor even thus, perhaps, without the necessities of his official station, that he would be persuaded to visit either one or the other.⁴³ In this he meditated no reflection upon his father by adoption, the Emperor Pius (who also, for aught we know, might secretly revolt from a species of amusement which, as the prescriptive test of unifidence in the popular estimate, it was necessary to support); on the contrary, he obeyed him with the punctiliousness of a Roman obedience; he watched the very motions of his countenance; and he waited so continually upon his pleasure, that for three-and-twenty years which they lived together, he is recorded to have slept out of his father's palace only for two nights. This rigor of filial duty illustrates a feature of Roman life; for such was the sanctity of law, that a father created by legal fiction was in all respects treated with the same veneration and affection, as a father who claimed upon the most unquestioned footing of natural right. Such, however, is the universal baseness of courts, that even this scrupulous and minute attention to his duties, did not protect Marcus from the injurious insinuations of whisperers. There were not wanting persons who endeavored to turn to account the general circumstances in the situation of the Cæsar, which pointed him out to the jealousy of the emperor. But these being no more than what adhere necessarily to the case of every heir *as such*, and meeting fortunately

with no more proneness to suspicion in the temper of the Augustus than they did with countenance in the conduct of the Cæsar, made so little impression, that at length these malicious efforts died away, from mere defect of encouragement.

The most interesting political crisis in the reign of Marcus was the war in Germany with the Marcomanni, concurrently with pestilence in Rome. The agitation of the public mind was intense; and prophets arose, as since under corresponding circumstances in Christian countries, who announced the approaching dissolution of the world. The purse of Marcus was open, as usual, to the distresses of his subjects. But it was chiefly for the expense of funerals that his aid was claimed. In this way he alleviated the domestic calamities of his capital, or expressed his sympathy with the sufferers, where alleviation was beyond his power; whilst, by the energy of his movements and his personal presence on the Danube, he soon dissipated those anxieties of Rome which pointed in a foreign direction. The war, however, had been a dreadful one, and had excited such just fears in the most experienced heads of the State, that, happening in its outbreak to coincide with a Parthian war, it was skilfully protracted until the entire thunders of Rome, and the undivided energies of her supreme captains, could be concentrated upon this single point. Both⁴⁴ emperors left Rome, and crossed the Alps; the war was thrown back upon its native

seats — Austria and the modern Hungary: great battles were fought and won; and peace, with consequent relief and restoration to liberty, was reconquered for many friendly nations, who had suffered under the ravages of the Marcomanni, the Sarmatians, the Quadi, and the Vandals; whilst some of the hostile people were nearly obliterated from the map, and their names blotted out from the memory of men.

Since the days of Gaul as an independent power, no war had so much alarmed the people of Rome; and their fear was justified by the difficulties and prodigious efforts which accompanied its suppression. The public treasury was exhausted; loans were an engine of fiscal policy, not then understood or perhaps practicable; and great distress was at hand for the State. In these circumstances, Marcus adopted a wise (though it was then esteemed a violent or desperate) remedy. Time and excessive luxury had accumulated in the imperial palaces and villas vast repositories of apparel, furniture, jewels, pictures, and household utensils, valuable alike for the materials and the workmanship. Many of these articles were consecrated, by color⁴⁵ or otherwise, to the use of the *sacred* household; and to have been found in possession of them, or with the materials for making them, would have entailed the penalties of treason. All these stores were now brought out to open day, and put up to public sale by auction, free license being first granted to the bidders, whoever they might be, to use.

or otherwise to exercise the fullest rights of property upon all they bought. The auction lasted for two months. Every man was guaranteed in the peaceable ownership of his purchases. And afterwards, when the public distress had passed over, a still further indulgence was extended to the purchasers. Notice was given—that all who were dissatisfied with their purchases, or who for other means might wish to recover their cost, would receive back the purchase money, upon returning the articles. Dinner services of gold and crystal, murrhine vases,⁴⁶ and even his wife's wardrobe of silken robes interwoven with gold, all these, and countless other articles, were accordingly returned, and the full auction prices paid back; or were *not* returned, and no displeasure shown to those who publicly displayed them as their own. Having gone so far, overruled by the necessities of the public service, in breaking down those legal barriers by which a peculiar dress, furniture, equipage, &c., were appropriated to the imperial house, as distinguished from the very highest of the noble houses, Marcus had a sufficient pretext for extending indefinitely the effect of the dispensation then granted. Articles purchased at the auction bore no characteristic marks to distinguish them from others of the same form and texture: so that a license to use any one article of the *sacred* pattern, became necessarily a general license for all others which resembled them. And thus, without

abrogating the prejudices which protected the imperial precedence, a body of sumptuary laws — the most ruinous to the progress of manufacturing skill,⁴⁷ which has ever been devised — were silently suspended. One or two aspiring families might be offended by these innovations, which meantime gave the pleasures of enjoyment to thousands, and of hope to millions.

But these, though very noticeable relaxations of the existing prerogative, were, as respected the temper which dictated them, no more than every-day manifestations of the emperor's perpetual benignity. Fortunately for Marcus, the indestructible privilege of the *divina domus* exalted it so unapproachably beyond all competition, that no possible remissions of aulic rigor could ever be misinterpreted; fear there could be none, lest such paternal indulgences should lose their effect and acceptation as pure condescensions. They could neither injure their author, who was otherwise charmed and consecrated, from disrespect; nor could they suffer injury themselves by misconstruction, or seem other than sincere, coming from a prince whose entire life was one long series of acts expressing the same affable spirit. Such, indeed, was the effect of this uninterrupted benevolence in the emperor, that at length all men, according to their several ages, hailed him as their father, son, or brother. And when he died, in the sixty-first year of his life (the 18th of his reign), he was lamented with a corresponding pe-

cularity in the public ceremonial, such, for instance, as the studied interfusion of the senatorial body with the populace, expressive of the levelling power of a true and comprehensive grief; a peculiarity for which no precedent was found, and which never afterwards became a precedent for similar honors to the best of his successors.

But malice has the divine privilege of ubiquity; and therefore it was that even this great model of private and public virtue did not escape the foulest libels: he was twice accused of murder; once on the person of a gladiator, with whom the empress is said to have fallen in love; and again, upon his associate in the empire, who died in reality of an apoplectic seizure, on his return from the German campaign. Neither of these atrocious fictions ever gained the least hold of the public attention, so entirely were they put down by the *prima facie* evidence of facts, and of the emperor's notorious character. In fact his faults, if he had any in his public life, were entirely those of too much indulgence. In a few cases of enormous guilt, it is recorded that he showed himself inexorable. But, generally speaking, he was far otherwise; and, in particular, he carried his indulgence to his wife's vices to an access which drew upon him the satirical notice of the stage.

The gladiators, and still more the sailors of that age were constantly to be seen plying naked, and Faustina,

was shameless enough to take her station in places which gave her the advantages of a leisurely review; and she actually selected favorites from both classes on the ground of a personal inspection. With others of greater rank she is said even to have been surprised by her husband; in particular with one called Tertullus, at dinner.⁴⁸ But to all remonstrances on this subject, Marcus is reported to have replied, ‘*Si uxorem dimittimus, reddamus et dotem;*’ meaning that, having received his right of succession to the empire simply by his adoption into the family of Pius, his wife’s father, gratitude and filial duty obliged him to view any dishonors emanating from his wife’s conduct as joint legacies with the splendors inherited from their common father; in short, that he was not at liberty to separate the rose from its thorns. However, the facts are not sufficiently known to warrant us in criticizing very severely his behavior on so trying an occasion. It would be too much for human frailty, that absolutely no stain should remain upon his memory. Possibly the best use which can be made of such a fact is, in the way of consolation to any unhappy man, whom his wife may too liberally have endowed with honors of this kind, by reminding him that he shares this distinction with the great philosophic emperor. The reflection upon this story by one of his biographers is this — ‘Such is the force of daily life in a good ruler, so great the power of his sanctity, gentleness, and

piety, that no breath of slander or invidious suggestion from an acquaintance can avail to sully his memory. In short, to Antonine, immutable as the heavens in the tenor of his own life, and in the manifestations of his own moral temper, and who was not by possibility liable to any impulse or “shadow of turning” from another man’s suggestion, it was not eventually an injury that he was dishonored by some of his connections; on him, invulnerable in his own character, neither a harlot for his wife, nor a gladiator for his son, could inflict a wound. Then as now, oh sacred lord Dioclesian, he was reputed a God; not as others are reputed, but specially and in a peculiar sense, and with a privilege to such worship from all men as you yourself addressed to him — who often breathe a wish to Heaven, that you were or could be such in life and merciful disposition as was Marcus Aurelius.’

What this encomiast says in a rhetorical tone was literally true. Marcus was raised to divine honors, or canonized⁴⁹ (as in Christian phrase we might express it). That was a matter of course; and, considering with whom he shared such honors, they are of little account in expressing the grief and veneration which followed him. A circumstance more characteristic, in the record of those observances which attested the public feeling, is this — that he who at that time had no bust, picture, or statue of Marcus in his house, was looked upon as a profane and irreligious man. Finally

to do him honor not by testimonies of men's opinions in his favor, but by facts of his own life and conduct, one memorable trophy there is amongst the moral distinctions of the philosophic Cæsar, utterly unnoticed hitherto by historians, but which will hereafter obtain a conspicuous place in any perfect record of the steps by which civilization has advanced, and human nature has been exalted. It is this : Marcus Aurelius was the first great military leader (and his civil office as supreme interpreter and creator of law consecrated his example) who allowed rights indefeasible — rights uncancelled by his misfortune in the field, to the prisoner of war. Others had been merciful and variously indulgent, upon their own discretion, and upon a random impulse to some, or possibly to all of their prisoners ; but this was either in submission to the usage of that particular war, or to special self-interest, or at most to individual good feeling. None had allowed a prisoner to challenge any forbearance as of right. But Marcus Aurelius first resolutely maintained that certain indestructible rights adhered to every soldier, simply as a man, which rights, capture by the sword, or any other accident of war, could do nothing to shake or diminish. We have noticed other instances in which Marcus Aurelius labored, at the risk of his popularity, to elevate the condition of human nature. But those, though equally expressing the goodness and loftiness of his nature, were by accident directed to a perishable

institution, which time has swept away, and along with it therefore his reformations. Here, however, is an immortal act of goodness built upon an immortal basis; for so long as armies congregate, and the sword is the arbiter of international quarrels, so long it will deserve to be had in remembrance, that the first man who set limits to the empire of wrong, and first translated within the jurisdiction of man's moral nature that state of war which had heretofore been consigned, by principle no less than by practice, to anarchy, animal violence, and brute force, was also the first philosopher who sat upon a throne.

In this, as in his universal spirit of forgiveness, we cannot but acknowledge a Christian by anticipation; nor can we hesitate to believe, that through one or other of his many philosophic friends,⁵⁰ whose attention Christianity was by that time powerful to attract, some reflex images of Christian doctrines — some half-conscious perception of its perfect beauty — had flashed upon his mind. And when we view him from this distant age, as heading that shining array, the Howards and the Wilberforces, who have since then in a practical sense hearkened to the sighs of ‘all prisoners and captives’ — we are ready to suppose him addressed by the great Founder of Christianity, in the words of Scripture, ‘*Verily, I say unto thee, Thou art not far from the kingdom of heaven.*’

As a supplement to the reign of Marcus Aurelius

We ought to notice the rise of one great rebel, the sole civil disturber of his time, in Syria. This was Avidius Cassius, whose descent from Cassius (the noted conspirator against the great Dictator, Julius) seems to have suggested to him a wandering idea, and at length a formal purpose of restoring the ancient republic. Avidius was the commander-in-chief of the Oriental army, whose head-quarters were then fixed at Antioch. His native disposition, which inclined him to cruelty, and his political views, made him, from his first entrance upon office, a severe disciplinarian. The well known enormities of the neighboring Daphne gave him ample opportunities for the exercise of his harsh propensities in reforming the dissolute soldiery. He amputated heads, arms, feet, and hams: he turned out his mutilated victims, as walking spectacles of warning; he burned them; he smoked them to death; and, in one instance, he crucified a detachment of his army, together with their centurions, for having, unauthorized, gained a splendid victory, and captured a large booty on the Danube. Upon this the soldiers mutinied against him, in mere indignation at his tyranny. However, he prosecuted his purpose, and prevailed, by his bold contempt of the danger which menaced him. From the abuses in the army, he proceeded to attack the abuses of the civil administration. But as these were protected by the example of the great proconsular lieutenants and provincial governors, policy

obliged him to confine himself to verbal expressions of anger; until at length sensible that this impotent railing did but expose him to contempt, he resolved to arm himself with the powers of radical reform, by open rebellion. His ultimate purpose was the restoration of the ancient republic, or, (as he himself expresses it in an interesting letter which yet survives,) ‘*ut in antiquum statum publica forma reddatur;*’ i. e. that the constitution should be restored to its original condition. And this must be effected by military violence and the aid of the executioner—or, in his own words, *multis gladiis, multis elogis*,⁵¹ (by innumerable sabres, by innumerable records of condemnation.) Against this man Marcus was warned by his imperial colleague Lucius Verus, in a very remarkable letter. After expressing his suspicions of him generally, the writer goes on to say—‘I would you had him closely watched. For he is a general disliker of us and of our doings; he is gathering together an enormous treasure, and he makes an open jest of our literary pursuits. You, for instance, he calls a philosophizing old woman, and me a dissolute buffoon and scamp. Consider what you would have done. For my part, I bear the fellow no ill will; but again I say, take care that he does not do a mischief to yourself, or your children.’

The answer of Marcus is noble and characteristic; ‘I have read your letter, and I will confess to you I think it more scrupulously timid than becomes an

emperor, and timid in a way unsuited to the spirit of our times. Consider this—if the empire is destined to Cassius by the decrees of Providence, in that case it will not be in our power to put him to death, however much we may desire to do so. You know your great-grandfather's saying,—No prince ever killed his own heir—no man, that is, ever yet prevailed against one whom Providence had marked out as his successor. On the other hand, if providence opposes him, then, without any cruelty on our part, he will spontaneously fall into some snare spread for him by destiny. Besides, we cannot treat a man as under impeachment whom nobody impeaches, and whom, by your own confession, the soldiers love. Then again, in cases of high treason, even those criminals who are convicted upon the clearest evidence, yet, as friendless and deserted persons contending against the powerful, and matched against those who are armed with the whole authority of the State, seems to suffer some wrong. You remember what your grandfather said: Wretched, indeed, is the fate of princes, who then first obtain credit in any charges of conspiracy which they allege—when they happen to seal the validity of their charges against the plotters, by falling martyrs to the plot. Domitian it was, in fact, who first uttered this truth; but I choose rather to place it under the authority of Hadrian, because the sayings of tyrants even when they are true and happy, carry less weight with them

than naturally they ought. For Cassius, then, let him keep his present temper and inclinations; and the more so — being (as he is) a good General — austere in his discipline, brave, and one whom the State cannot afford to lose. For as to what you insinuate — that I ought to provide for my children's interests, by putting this man judicially out of the way, very frankly I say to you — Perish my children, if Avidius shall deserve more attachment than they, and if it shall prove salutary to the State that Cassius should live rather than the children of Marcus.'

This letter affords a singular illustration of fatalism, such certainly as we might expect in a Stoic, but carried even to a Turkish excess; and not theoretically professed only, but practically acted upon in a case of capital hazard. *That no prince ever killed his own successor, i. e. that it was in vain for a prince to put conspirators to death, because, by the very possibility of doing so, a demonstration is obtained that such conspirators had never been destined to prosper,* is as condensed and striking an expression of fatalism as ever has been devised. The rest of the letter is truly noble, and breathes the very soul of careless magnanimity reposing upon conscious innocence. Meantime Cassius increased in power and influence: his army had become a most formidable engine of his ambition through its restored discipline; and his own authority was sevenfold greater, because he had himself created

that discipline in the face of unequalled temptations hourly renewed and rooted in the very centre of his head-quarters. ‘Daphné, by Orontes,’ a suburb of Antioch, was infamous for its seductions; and *Daphnic luxury* had become proverbial for expressing an excess of voluptuousness, such as other places could not rival by mere defect of means, and preparations elaborate enough to sustain it in all its varieties of mode, or to conceal it from public notice. In the very purlieus of this great nest, or sty of sensuality, within sight and touch of its pollutions, did he keep his army fiercely reined up, daring and defying them, as it were, to taste of the banquet whose very odor they inhaled.

Thus provided with the means, and improved instruments, for executing his purposes, he broke out into open rebellion; and, though hostile to the *principatus*, or personal supremacy of one man, he did not feel his republican purism at all wounded by the style and title of *Imperator*, — that being a military term, and a mere titular honor, which had co-existed with the severest forms of republicanism. *Imperator*, then, he was saluted and proclaimed; and doubtless the writer of the warning letter from Syria would now declare that the sequel had justified the fears which Marcus had thought so unbecoming to a Roman emperor. But again Marcus would have said, ‘Let us wait for the sequel of the sequel,’ and that would have justified him. It is often found by experience that men, who

have learned to reverence a person in authority chiefly by his offices of correction applied to their own aberrations, — who have known and feared him, in short, in his character of reformer, — will be more than usually inclined to desert him on his first movement in the direction of wrong. Their obedience being founded on fear, and fear being never wholly disconnected from hatred, they naturally seize with eagerness upon the first lawful pretext for disobedience ; the luxury of revenge is, in such a case, too potent, — a meritorious disobedience too novel a temptation, — to have a chance of being rejected. Never, indeed, does erring human nature look more abject than in the person of a severe exactor of duty, who has immolated thousands to the wrath of offended law, suddenly himself becoming a capital offender, a glozing tempter in search of accomplices, and in that character at once standing before the meanest of his own dependents as a self-deposed officer, liable to any man's arrest, and, *ipso facto*, a suppliant for his own mercy. The stern and haughty Cassius, who had so often tightened the cords of discipline until they threatened to snap asunder, now found, experimentally, the bitterness of these obvious truths. The trembling sentinel now looked insolently in his face ; the cowering legionary, with whom ‘to hear was to obey,’ now mused or even bandied words upon his orders ; the great lieutenants of his office, who stood next to his own person in

uthority, were preparing for revolt, open or secret, as circumstances should prescribe ; not the accuser only, but the very avenger, was upon his steps ; Nemesis, that Nemesis who once so closely adhered to the name and fortunes of the lawful Cæsar, turning against every one of his assassins⁵² the edge of his own assassinating sword, was already at his heels ; and in the midst of a sudden prosperity, and its accompanying shouts of gratulation, he heard the sullen knells of approaching death. Antioch, it was true, the great Roman capital of the Orient, bore him, for certain motives of self-interest, peculiar good-will. But there was no city of the world in which the Roman Cæsar did not reckon many liege-men and partisans. And the very hands, which dressed his altars and crowned his Prætorian pavilion, might not improbably in that same hour put an edge upon the sabre which was to avenge the injuries of the too indulgent and long suffering Antoninus. Meantime, to give a color of patriotism to his treason, Cassius alleged public motives ; in a letter, which he wrote after assuming the purple, he says :

Wretched empire, miserable state, which endures these hungry blood-suckers battening on her vitals ! — A worthy man, doubtless, is Marcus ; who, in his eagerness to be reputed clement, suffers those to live whose conduct he himself abhors. Where is that L. Cassius, whose name I vain'y inherit ? Where is that Marcus, — not Aurelius, mark you, but Cato Jensorius

Where the good old discipline of ancestral times, long since indeed disused, but now not so much as looked after in our aspirations? Marcus Antoninus is a scholar; he enacts the philosopher; and he tries conclusions upon the four elements, and upon the nature of the soul; and he discourses most learnedly upon the *Honestum*; and concerning the *Summum Bonum* he is unanswerable. Meanwhile, is he learned in the interests of the State? Can he argue a point upon the public economy? You see what a host of sabres is required, what a host of impeachments, sentences, executions, before the commonwealth can reassume its ancient integrity!⁵³ What! shall I esteem as proconsuls, as governors, those who for that end only deem themselves invested with lieutenancies or great senatorial appointments, that they may gorge themselves with the provincial luxuries and wealth? No doubt you heard in what way our friend the philosopher gave the place of prætorian prefect to one who but three days before was a bankrupt,—insolvent, by G—, and a beggar. Be not you content: that same gentlemen is now as rich as a prefect should be; and has been so, I tell you, any time these three days. And how, I pray you how—how, my good sir? How, but out of the bowels of the provinces, and the marrow of their bones? But no matter, let them be rich; let them be blood-suckers; no much, God willing, shall they regorge into the treasury of the empire. Let but Heaven smile upon

our party, and the Cassiani shall return to the republic its old impersonal supremacy.'

But Heaven did *not* smile; nor did man. Rome heard with bitter indignation of this old traitor's ingratitude, and his false mask of republican civism. Excepting Marcus Aurelius himself, not one man but thirsted for revenge. And that was soon obtained. He and all his supporters, one after the other, rapidly fell (as Marcus had predicted) into snares laid by the officers who continued true to their allegiance. Except the family and household of Cassius, there remained in a short time none for the vengeance of the Senate, or for the mercy of the Emperor. In them centred the last arrears of hope and fear, of chastisement or pardon, depending upon this memorable revolt. And about the disposal of their persons arose the final question to which the case gave birth. The letters yet remain in which the several parties interested gave utterance to the passions which possessed them. Faustina, the Empress, urged her husband with feminine violence to adopt against his prisoners comprehensive acts of vengeance. 'Noli parcere hominibus,' says she, 'qui tibi non pepererunt; et nec mihi nec filiis nostris parcerent,⁴ si vicissent.' And elsewhere she irritates his wrath against the army as accomplices for the time, and as a body of men 'qui, nisi opprimuntur, opprimunt.' We may be sure of the result. After recommending her zeal for her own family, he says,

Ego vero et ejus liberis parcam, et genero, et uxori, et ad senatum scribam ne aut proscriptio gravior sit, aut pœna crudelior;’ adding that, had his counsels prevailed, not even Cassius himself should have perished. As to his relatives, ‘Why,’ he asks, ‘should I speak of pardon to them, who indeed have done no wrong, and are blameless even in purpose?’ Accordingly, his letter of intercession to the Senate protests, that, so far from asking for further victims to the crime of Avidius Cassius, would to God he could call back from the dead many of those who had fallen! With immense applause, and with turbulent acclamations, the Senate granted all his requests ‘in consideration of his philosophy, of his long-suffering, of his learning and accomplishments, of his nobility, of his innocence.’ And until a monster arose who delighted in the blood of the guiltless, it is recorded that the posterity of Avidius Cassius lived in security, and were admitted to honors and public distinctions by favor of him, whose life and empire that memorable traitor had sought to undermine under the favor of his guileless master’s too confiding magnanimity.

CHAPTER V.

THE Roman empire, and the Roman emperors, it might naturally be supposed by one who had not ~~as~~ yet traversed that tremendous chapter in the history of man, would be likely to present a separate and almost equal interest. The empire, in the first place, as the most magnificent monument of human power which our planet has beheld, must for that single reason, even though its records were otherwise of little interest, fix upon itself the very keenest gaze from all succeeding ages to the end of time. To trace the fortunes and revolution of that unrivalled monarchy over which the Roman eagle brooded, to follow the dilapidations of that aerial arch, which silently and steadily through seven centuries ascended under the colossal architecture of the children of Romulus, to watch the unweaving of the golden arras, and step by step to see paralysis stealing over the once perfect cohesion of the republican creations,—cannot but insure a severe, though melancholy delight. On its own separate account, the decline of this throne-shattering power must and will engage the foremost place amongst all historical reviewers. The ‘dislimning’ and unmoulding of some mighty pageantry in the

heavens has its own appropriate grandeurs, no less than the gathering of its cloudy pomps. The going down of the sun is contemplated with no less awe than his rising. Nor is any thing portentous in its growth, which is not also portentous in the steps and ‘moments’ of its decay. Hence, in the second place, we might presume a commensurate interest in the characters and fortunes of the successive emperors. If the empire challenged our first survey, the next would seem due to the Cæsars who guided its course; to the great ones who retarded, and to the bad ones who precipitated, its ruin.

Such might be the natural expectation of an inexperienced reader. But it is *not* so. The Cæsars, throughout their long line, are not interesting, neither personally in themselves, nor derivatively from the tragic events to which their history is attached. Their whole interest lies in their situation—in the unapproachable altitude of their thrones. But considered with a reference to their human qualities, scarcely one in the whole series can be viewed with a human interest apart from the circumstances of his position. ‘Pass like shadows, so depart!’ The reason for this defect of all personal variety of interest in these enormous potentates, must be sought in the constitution of their power and the very necessities of their office. Even the greatest among them, those who by way of distinction were called *the Great*, as Constantine and

Theodosius, were not great, for they were not magnanimous; nor could they be so under *their* tenure of power, which made it a duty to be suspicious, and, by fastening upon all varieties of original temper one dire necessity of bloodshed, extinguished under this monotonous cloud of cruel jealousy and everlasting panic every characteristic feature of genial human nature, that would else have emerged through so long a train of princes. There is a remarkable story told of Aprippina; that, upon some occasions, when a wizard announced to her, as truths which he had read in the heavens, the two fatal necessities impending over her son,— one that he should ascend to empire, the other that he should murder herself, she replied in these stern and memorable words — *Occidat dum imperet*. Upon which a continental writer comments thus: ‘Never before or since have three such words issued from the lips of woman; and in truth, one knows not which most to abominate or admire — the aspiring princess, or the loving mother. Meantime, in these few words lies naked to the day, in its whole hideous deformity, the very essence of Romanism and the imperial power, and one might here consider the mother of Nero as the impersonation of that monstrous condition.’

This is true: *Occidat dum imperet*, was the watchword and very cognizance of the Roman imperator. But almost equally it was his watchword — *Occidatus*

dum imperet. Doing or suffering, the Cæsars were almost equally involved in bloodshed ; very few that were not murderers, and nearly all were themselves murdered.

The empire, then, must be regarded as the primary object of our interest ; and it is in this way only that any secondary interest arises for the emperors. Now, with respect to the empire, the first question which presents itself is, — Whence, that is, from what causes and from what era, we are to date its decline ? Gibbon, as we all know, dates it from the reign of Commodus ; but certainly upon no sufficient, or even plausible grounds. Our own opinion we shall state boldly : the empire itself, from the very era of its establishment, was one long decline of the Roman power. A vast monarchy had been created and consolidated by the all-conquering instincts of a republic—cradled and nursed in wars, and essentially warlike by means of all its institutions⁵⁵ and by the habits of the people. This monarchy had been of too slow a growth — too gradual, and too much according to the regular stages of nature herself in its development, to have any chance of being other than well cemented : the cohesion of its parts was intense ; seven centuries of growth demand one or two at least for palpable decay ; and it is only for harlequin empires like that of Napoleon, run up with the rapidity of pantomime, to fall asunder under the instant re-action of a few false moves in

politics, or a single unfortunate campaign. Hence it was, and from the prudence of Augustus acting through a very long reign, sustained at no very distant interval by the personal inspection and revisions of Hadrian, that for some time the Roman power seemed to be stationary. What else could be expected? The mere strength of the impetus derived from the republican institutions could not but propagate itself, and cause even a motion in advance, for some time after those institutions had themselves given way. And, besides, the military institutions survived all others; and the army continued very much the same in its discipline and composition, long after Rome and all its civic institutions had bent before an utter revolution. It was very possible even that emperors should have arisen with martial propensities, and talents capable of masking, for many years, by specious but transitory conquests, the causes that were silently sapping the foundations of Roman supremacy; and thus by accidents of personal character and taste, an empire might even have expanded itself in appearance, which, by all its permanent and real tendencies, was even then shrinking within narrower limits, and travelling downwards to dissolution. In reality one such emperor there was. Trajan, whether by martial inclinations, or (as is supposed by some) by dissatisfaction with his own position at Rome, when brought into more immediate connection with the senate, was driven into needless

war ; and he achieved conquests in the direction of Dacia as well as Parthia. But that these conquests were not substantial,—that they were connected by no true cement of cohesion with the existing empire, is evident from the rapidity with which they were abandoned. In the next reign, the empire had already recoiled within its former limits ; and in two reigns further on, under Marcus Antoninus, though a prince of elevated character and warlike in his policy, we find such concessions of territory made to the Marcomanni and others, as indicate too plainly the shrinking energies of a waning empire. In reality, if we consider the polar opposition, in point of interest and situation, between the great officers of the republic and the Augustus or Cæsar of the empire, we cannot fail to see the immense effect which that difference must have had upon the permanent spirit of conquest. Cæsar was either adopted or elected to a situation of infinite luxury and enjoyment. He had no interests to secure by fighting in person ; and he had a powerful interest in preventing others from fighting ; since in that way only he could raise up competitors to himself, and dangerous seducers of the army. A consul, on the other hand, or great lieutenant of the senate, had nothing to enjoy or to hope for, when his term of office should have expired, unless according to his success in creating military fame and influence for himself. Those Cæsars who fought whilst the empire was or seemed to

be stationary, as Trajan, did so from personal taste. Those who fought in after centuries, when the decay became apparent, and dangers drew nearer, as Aurelian, did so from the necessities of fear; and under neither impulse were they likely to make durable conquests. The spirit of conquest having therefore departed at the very time when conquest would have become more difficult even to the republican energies, both from remoteness of ground and from the martial character of the chief nations which stood beyond the frontier,— it was a matter of necessity that with the republican institutions should expire the whole principle of territorial aggrandizement; and that, if the empire seemed to be stationary for some time after its establishment by Julius, and its final settlement by Augustus, this was through no strength of its own, or inherent in its own constitution, but through the continued action of that strength which it had inherited from the republic. In a philosophical sense, therefore, it may be affirmed, that the empire of the Cæsars was *always* in decline; ceasing to go forward, it could not do other than retrograde; and even the first *appearances* of decline can, with no propriety, be referred to the reign of Commodus. His vices exposed him to public contempt and assassination; but neither one nor the other had any effect upon the strength of the empire. Here, therefore, is one just subject of complaint against Gibbon, that he has dated the declension of the Roman

power from a commencement arbitrarily assumed ; another, and a heavier, is, that he has failed to notice the steps and separate indications of decline as they arose,—the moments (to speak in the language of dynamics) through which the decline travelled onwards to its consummation. It is also a grievous offence as regards the true purposes of history,—and one which, in a complete exposition of the imperial history, we should have a right to insist on,—that Gibbon brings forward only such facts as allow of a scenical treatment, and seems everywhere, by the glancing style of his allusions, to presuppose an acquaintance with that very history which he undertakes to deliver. Our immediate purpose, however, is simply to characterize the office of emperor, and to notice such events and changes as operated for evil, and for a final effect of decay, upon the Cæsars or their empire. As the best means of realizing it, we shall rapidly review the history of both, premising that we confine ourselves to the true Cæsars, and the true empire of the West.

The first overt act of weakness — the first expression of conscious declension, as regarded the foreign enemies of Rome, occurred in the reign of Hadrian ; for it is a very different thing to forbear making conquests, and to renounce them when made. It is possible, however, that the cession then made of Mesopotamia and Armenia, however sure to be interpreted into the language of fear by the enemy, did

not imply any such principle in this emperor. He was of a civic and paternal spirit, and anxious for the substantial welfare of the empire rather than its ostentatious glory. The internal administration of affairs had very much gone into neglect since the times of Augustus; and Hadrian was perhaps right in supposing that he could effect more public good by an extensive progress through the empire, and by a personal correction of abuses, than by any military enterprise. It is, besides, asserted, that he received an indemnity in money for the provinces beyond the Euphrates. But still it remains true, that in his reign the God Terminus made his first retrograde motion; and this emperor became naturally an object of public obloquy at Rome, and his name fell under the superstitious ban of a fatal tradition connected with the foundation of the capital. The two Antonines, Titus and Marcus, who came next in succession, were truly good and patriotic princes; perhaps the only princes in the whole series who combined the virtues of private and of public life. In their reigns the frontier line was maintained in its integrity, and at the expense of some severe fighting under Marcus, who was a strenuous general at the same time that he was a severe student. It is, however, true, as we observed above, that, by allowing a settlement within the Roman frontier to a barbarous people. Marcus Aurelius raised the first eminent precedent in favor of those Gothic, Vandal,

and Frankish hives, who were as yet hidden behind a cloud of years. Homes had been obtained by Trans-Danubian barbarians upon the sacred territory of Rome and Cæsar: that fact remained upon tradition: whilst the terms upon which they had been obtained, how much or how little connected with fear, necessarily became liable to doubt and to oblivion. Here we pause to remark, that the first twelve Cæsars, together with Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the two Antonines, making seventeen emperors, compose the first of four nearly equal groups, who occupied the throne in succession until the extinction of the Western Empire. And at this point be it observed,—that is, at the termination of the first group,—we take leave of all genuine virtue. In no one of the succeeding princes, if we except Alexander Severus, do we meet with any goodness of heart, or even amiableness of manners. The best of the future emperors, in a public sense, were harsh and repulsive in private character.

The second group, as we have classed them, terminating with Philip the Arab, commences with Commodus. This unworthy prince, although the son of the excellent Marcus Antoninus, turned out a monster of debauchery. At the moment of his father's death, he was present in person at the head-quarters of the army on the Danube, and of necessity partook in many of their hardships. This it was which furnished his evil counsellors with their sole argument for urging his

departure to the capital. A council having been convened, the faction of court sycophants pressed upon his attention the inclemency of the climate, contrasting it with the genial skies and sunny fields of Italy; and the season, which happened to be winter, gave strength to their representations. What! would the emperor be content for ever to hew out the frozen water with an axe before he could assuage his thirst? And, again, the total want of fruit-trees—did that recommend their present station as a fit one for the imperial court? Commodus, ashamed to found his objections to the station upon grounds so unsoldierly as these, affected to be moved by political reasons: some great senatorial house might take advantage of his distance from home,—might seize the palace, fortify it, and raise levies in Italy capable of sustaining its pretensions to the throne. These arguments were combated by Pompeianus, who, besides his personal weight as an officer, had married the eldest sister of the young emperor. Shame prevailed for the present with Commodus, and he dismissed the council with an assurance that he would think farther of it. The sequel was easy to foresee. Orders were soon issued for the departure of the court to Rome, and the task of managing the barbarians of Dacia was delegated to lieutenants. The system upon which these officers executed their commission was a mixed one of terror and persuasion. Some they defeated in battle; and these were the majority; for Herodian

says, πλείστους τῶν βαρβαρῶν ὅπλοις ἔχειρώσαντο : others they bribed into peace by large sums of money. And no doubt this last article in the policy of Commodus was that which led Gibbon to assign to this reign the first rudiments of the Roman declension. But it should be remembered, that, virtually, this policy was but the further prosecution of that which had already been adopted by Marcus Aurelius. Concessions and temperaments of any sort or degree showed that the Pannonian frontier was in too formidable a condition to be treated with uncompromising rigor. Τὸ ἀμέριμνον ὥνοιμενος, purchasing an immunity from all further anxiety, Commodus (as the historian expresses it) πάντα ἐδίδου τὰ αἰτούμενα — conceded all demands whatever. His journey to Rome was one continued festival: and the whole population of Rome turned out to welcome him. At this period he was undoubtedly the darling of the people: his personal beauty was splendid; and he was connected by blood with some of the greatest nobility. Over this flattering scene of hope and triumph clouds soon gathered; with the mob, indeed, there is reason to think that he continued a favorite to the last; but the respectable part of the citizens were speedily disgusted with his self-degradation, and came to hate him even more than ever or by any class he had been loved. The Roman pride never shows itself more conspicuously throughout all history, than in the alienation of heart which inevitably followed any great and

continued outrages upon his own majesty, committed by their emperor. Cruelties the most atrocious, acts of vengeance the most bloody, patricide, parricide, all were viewed with more toleration than oblivion of his own inviolable sanctity. Hence we imagine the wrath with which Rome would behold Commodus, under the eyes of four hundred thousand spectators, making himself a party to the contests of gladiators. In his earlier exhibition as an archer, it is possible that his matchless dexterity, and his unerring eye, would avail to mitigate the censures: but when the Roman Imperator actually descended to the arena in the garb and equipments of a servile prize-fighter, and personally engaged in combat with such antagonists, having previously submitted to their training and discipline — the public indignation rose to a height, which spoke aloud the language of encouragement to conspiracy and treason. These were not wanting; three memorable plots against his life were defeated; one of them (that of Maternus, the robber) accompanied with romantic circumstances,²³ which we have narrated in an earlier paper of this series. Another was set on foot by his eldest sister, Lucilla; nor did her close relationship protect her from capital punishment. In that instance, the immediate agent of her purposes, Quintianus, a young man, of signal resolution and daring, who had attempted to stab the emperor at the entrance of the amphitheatre, though baffled in his purpose, uttered a word which rang con-

tinually in the ears of Commodus, and poisoned his peace of mind for ever. His vengeance, perhaps, was thus more effectually accomplished than if he had at once dismissed his victim from life. ‘The senate,’ he had said, ‘send thee this through me:’ and henceforward the senate was the object of unslumbering suspicions to the emperor. Yet the public suspicions settled upon a different quarter; and a very memorable scene must have pointed his own in the same direction, supposing that he had been previously blind to his danger.

On a day of great solemnity, when Rome had assembled her myriads in the amphitheatre, just at the very moment when the nobles, the magistrates, the priests, all, in short, that was venerable or consecrated in the State, with the Imperator in their centre, had taken their seats, and were waiting for the opening of the shows, a stranger, in the robe of a philosopher, bearing a staff in his hand, (which also was the professional ensign⁵⁷ of a philosopher,) stepped forward, and, by the waving of his hand, challenged the attention of Commodus. Deep silence ensued: upon which, in a few words, ominous to the ear as the handwriting on the wall to the eye of Belshazzar, the stranger unfolded to Commodus the instant peril which menaced both his life and his throne, from his great servant Perennius. What personal purpose of benefit to himself this stranger might have connected with his public

warning, or by whom he might have been suborned, was never discovered; for he was instantly arrested by the agents of the great officer whom he had denounced, dragged away to punishment, and put to a cruel death. Commodus dissembled his panic for the present; but soon after, having received undeniable proofs (as is alleged) of the treason imputed to Perennius, in the shape of a coin which had been struck by his son, he caused the father to be assassinated; and, on the same day, by means of forged letters, before this news could reach the son, who commanded the Illyrian armies, he lured him also to destruction, under the belief that he was obeying the summons of his father to a private interview on the Italian frontier. So perished those enemies, if enemies they really were. But to these tragedies succeeded others far more comprehensive in their mischief, and in more continuous succession than is recorded upon any other page of universal history. Rome was ravaged by a pestilence — by a famine — by riots amounting to a civil war — by a dreadful massacre of the unarmed mob — by shocks of earthquake — and, finally, by a fire which consumed the national bank,⁵⁸ and the most sumptuous buildings of the city. To these horrors, with a rapidity characteristic of the Roman depravity, and possibly only under the most extensive demoralization of the public mind, succeeded festivals of gorgeous pomp, and amphitheatrical exhibitions, upon a

scale of grandeur absolutely unparalleled by all former attempts. Then were beheld, and familiarized to the eyes of the Roman mob — to children — and to women, animals as yet known to us, says Herodian, only in pictures. Whatever strange or rare animal could be drawn from the depths of India, from Siam and Pegu, or from the unvisited nooks of Ethiopia, were now brought together as subjects for the archery of the universal lord.⁵⁹ Invitations (and the invitations of kings are commands) had been scattered on this occasion profusely ; not, as heretofore, to individuals or to families — but, as was in proportion to the occasion where an emperor was the chief performer, to nations. People were summoned by circles of longitude and latitude to come and see [*θεασάμενοι ἃ μὴ πρότερον μῆτε ἐωράκεσαν μῆτε ἀκηκόεισαν* — things that eye had not seen nor ear heard of] the specious miracles of nature brought together from arctic and from tropic deserts, putting forth their strength, their speed, or their beauty, and glorifying by their deaths the matchless hand of the Roman king. There was beheld the lion from Bilibulgerid, and the leopard from Hindostan — the rein-deer from polar latitudes — the antelope from the Zaara — and the leigh, or gigantic stag, from Britain. Thither came the buffalo and the bison, the white bull of Northumberland and Galloway, the unicorn from the regions of Nepaul or Thibet, the rhinoceros and the river-horse from Senegal, w' th the elephant &c.

Ceylon or Siam. The ostrich and the cameleopard, the wild ass and the zebra, the chamois and the ibex of Angora,— all brought their tributes of beauty or deformity to these vast aceldamas of Rome: their savage voices ascended in tumultuous uproar to the chambers of the capitol: a million of spectators sat round them: standing in the centre was a single statu-esque figure — the imperial sagittary, beautiful as an Antinous, and majestic as a Jupiter, whose hand was so steady and whose eye so true, that he was never known to miss, and who, in this accomplishment at least, was so absolute in his excellence, that, as we are assured by a writer not disposed to flatter him, the very foremost of the Parthian archers and of the Mauritanian lancers [*Παρθναίων οἱ τοξικὴν ἀκριβοῦντες, καὶ Μαυρούσιων οἱ ἀκοντιζεῖν ἄριστοι*] were not able to contend with him. Juvenal, in a well known passage upon the disproportionate endings of illustrious careers, drawing one of his examples from Marius, says that he ought, for his own glory, and to make his end correspondent to his life, to have died at the moment when he descended from his triumphal chariot at the portals of the capitol. And of Commodus, in like manner, it may be affirmed, that, had he died in the exercise of his peculiar art, with a hecatomb of victims rendering homage to his miraculous skill, by the regularity of the files which they presented, as they lay stretched out dying or dead upon the arena. — he would have

left a splendid and characteristic impression of himself upon that nation of spectators who had witnessed his performance. He was the noblest artist in his own profession that the world had seen — in archery he was the Robin Hood of Rome ; he was in the very meridian of his youth ; and he was the most beautiful man of his own times [*τῶν καθ' ἑαυτὸν ἀνθρώπων κάλλει εὐπρεπέστατος*]. He would therefore have looked the part admirably of the dying gladiator ; and he would have died in his natural vocation. But it was ordered otherwise ; his death was destined to private malice, and to an ignoble hand. And much obscurity still rests upon the motives of the assassins, though its circumstances are reported with unusual minuteness of detail. One thing is evident, that the public and patriotic motives assigned by the perpetrators as the remote causes of their conspiracy, cannot have been the true ones.

The grave historian may sum up his character of Commodus by saying that, however richly endowed with natural gifts, he abused them all to bad purposes ; that he derogated from his noble ancestors, and disavowed the obligations of his illustrious name ; and as the climax of his offences, that he dishonored the purple — *αισχροῖς ἐπιτηδεύμασιν* — by the baseness of his pursuits. All that is true, and more than that. But these considerations were not of a nature to affect his parasitical attendants very nearly or keenly. Yet the

story runs — that Marcia, his privileged mistress, deeply affected by the anticipation of some further outrages upon his high dignity which he was then meditating, had carried the importunity of her deprecations too far ; that the irritated emperor had consequently inscribed her name, in company with others, (whom he had reason to tax with the same offence, or whom he suspected of similar sentiments,) in his little black book, or pocket souvenir of death ; that this book, being left under the cushion of a sofa, had been conveyed into the hands of Marcia by a little pet boy, called Philo-Commodus, who was caressed equally by the emperor and by Marcia ; that she had immediately called to her aid, and to the participation of her plot, those who participated in her danger ; and that the proximity of their own intended fate had prescribed to them an immediate attempt ; the circumstances of which were these. At mid-day the emperor was accustomed to bathe, and at the same time to take refreshments. On this occasion, Marcia, agreeably to her custom, presented him with a goblet of wine medicated with poison. Of this wine, having just returned from the fatigues of the chase, Commodus drank freely, and almost immediately fell into heavy slumbers ; from which, however, he was soon aroused by deadly sickness. That was a case which the conspirators had not taken into their calculations ; and they now began to fear that the violent vomiting which succeeded might

throw off the poison. There was no time to be lost : and the barbarous Marcia, who had so often slept in the arms of the young emperor, was the person to propose that he should now be strangled. A young gladiator, named Narcissus, was therefore introduced into the room ; what passed is not known circumstantially : but, as the emperor was young and athletic, though off his guard at the moment, and under the disadvantage of sickness, and as he had himself been regularly trained in the gladiatorial discipline, there can be little doubt that the vile assassin would meet with a desperate resistance. And thus, after all, there is good reason to think that the emperor resigned his life in the character of a dying gladiator.⁶⁰

So perished the eldest and sole surviving son of the great Marcus Antoninus ; and the crown passed into the momentary possession of two old men, who reigned in succession each for a few weeks. The first of these was Pertinax, an upright man, a good officer, and an unseasonable reformer ; unseasonable for those times, but more so for himself. Lætus, the ringleader in the assassination of Commodus, had been at that time the prætorian prefect — an office which a German writer considers as best represented to modern ideas by the Turkish post of grand vizier. Needing a protector at this moment, he naturally fixed his eyes upon Pertinax — as then holding the powerful command of city prefect (or governor of Rome). Him therefore he recom-

mended to the soldiery — that is, to the prætorian cohorts. The soldiery had no particular objection to the old general, if he and they could agree upon terms; his age being doubtless appreciated as a first-rate recommendation, in a case where it insured a speedy renewal of the lucrative bargain.

The only demur arose with Pertinax himself: he had been leader of the troops in Britain, then superintendent of the police in Rome, thirdly proconsul in Africa, and finally consul and governor of Rome. In these great official stations he stood near enough to the throne to observe the dangers with which it was surrounded; and it is asserted that he declined the offered dignity. But it is added, that, finding the choice allowed him lay between immediate death⁶¹ and acceptance, he closed with the proposals of the prætorian cohorts, at the rate of about ninety-six pounds per man; which largess he paid by bringing to sale the rich furniture of the last emperor. The danger which usually threatened a Roman Cæsar in such cases was — lest he should not be able to fulfil his contract. But in the case of Pertinax the danger began from the moment when he *had* fulfilled it. Conceiving himself to be now released from his dependency, he commenced his reforms, civil as well as military, with a zeal which alarmed all those who had an interest in maintaining the old abuses. To two great factions he thus made himself especially obnoxious — to the præ-

torian cohorts, and to the courtiers under the last reign. The connecting link between these two parties was Lætus, who belonged personally to the last, and still retained his influence with the first. Possibly his fears were alarmed; but, at all events, his cupidity was not satisfied. He conceived himself to have been ill rewarded; and, immediately resorting to the same weapons which he had used against Commodus, he stimulated the prætorian guards to murder the emperor. Three hundred of them pressed into the palace: Pertinax attempted to harangue them, and to vindicate himself; but not being able to obtain a hearing, he folded his robe about his head, called upon Jove the Avenger, and was immediately dispatched.

The throne was again empty after a reign of about eighty days; and now came the memorable scandal of putting up the empire to auction. There were two bidders, Sulpicianus and Didius⁶² Julianus. The first, however, at that time governor of Rome, lay under a weight of suspicion, being the father-in-law of Pertinax, and likely enough to exact vengeance for his murder. He was besides outbid by Julianus. Sulpician offered about one hundred and sixty pounds a man to the guards; his rival offered two hundred, and assured them besides of immediate payment; ‘for,’ said he, ‘I have the money at home, without need of raising it from the possessions of the crown.’ Upon this the empire was knocked down to the

highest bidder. So shocking, however, was this arrangement to the Roman pride, that the guards durst not leave their new creation without military protection. The resentment of an unarmed mob, however, soon ceased to be of foremost importance; this resentment extended rapidly to all the frontiers of the empire, where the armies felt that the prætorian cohorts had no exclusive title to give away the throne, and their leaders felt, that, in a contest of this nature, their own claims were incomparably superior to those of the present occupant. Three great candidates therefore started forward — Septimius Severus, who commanded the armies in Illyria, Pescennius Niger in Syria, and Albinus in Britain. Severus, as the nearest to Rome, marched and possessed himself of that city. Vengeance followed upon all parties concerned in the late murder. Julianus, unable to complete his bargain, had already been put to death, as a deprecatory offering to the approaching army. Severus himself inflicted death upon Lætus, and dismissed the prætorian cohorts. Thence marching against his Syrian rival, Niger, who had formerly been his friend, and who was not wanting in military skill, he overthrew him in three great battles. Niger fled to Antioch, the seat of his late government, and was there decapitated. Meantime Albinus, the British commander-in-chief, had already been won over by the title of Cæsar, or adopted heir to the new Augustus. But the hollowness of this bribe

soon became apparent, and the two competitors met to decide their pretensions at Lyons. In the great battle which followed, Severus fell from his horse, and was at first supposed to be dead. But recovering, he defeated his rival, who immediately committed suicide. Severus displayed his ferocious temper sufficiently by sending the head of Albinus to Rome. Other expressions of his natural character soon followed : he suspected strongly that Albinus had been favored by the senate ; forty of that body, with their wives and children, were immediately sacrificed to his wrath : but he never forgave the rest, nor endured to live upon terms of amity amongst them. Quitting Rome in disgust, he employed himself first in making war upon the Parthians, who had naturally, from situation, befriended his Syrian rival. Their capital cities he overthrew ; and afterwards, by way of employing his armies, made war in Britain. At the city of York he died ; and to his two sons, Geta and Caracalla, he bequeathed, as his dying advice, a maxim of policy, which sufficiently indicates the situation of the empire at that period ; it was this — ‘To enrich the soldiery at any price, and to regard the rest of their subjects as so many ciphers.’ But, as a critical historian remarks, this was a short-sighted and self-destroying policy ; since in no way is the subsistence of the soldier made more insecure, than by diminishing the general security of rights and property to those who are not soldiers, from whom

after all, the funds must be sought, by which the soldier himself is to be paid and nourished. The two sons of Severus, whose bitter enmity is so memorably put on record by their actions, travelled simultaneously to Rome; but so mistrustful of each other, that at every stage the two princes took up their quarters at different houses. Geta has obtained the sympathy of historians, because he happened to be the victim; but there is reason to think, that each of the brothers was conspiring against the other. The weak credulity, rather than the conscious innocence, of Geta, led to the catastrophe; he presented himself at a meeting with his brother in the presence of their common mother, and was murdered by Caracalla in his mother's arms. He was, however, avenged; the horrors of that tragedy, and remorse for the twenty thousand murders which had followed, never forsook the guilty Caracalla. Quitting Rome, but pursued into every region by the bloody image of his brother, the emperor henceforward led a wandering life at the head of his legions; but never was there a better illustration of the poet's maxim that

‘ Remorse is as the mind in which it grows :
If *that* be gentle,’ &c.

For the remorse of Caracalla put on no shape of repentance. On the contrary, he carried anger and oppression wherever he moved; and protected himself from plots only by living in the very centre of a

nomadic camp. Six years had passed away in this manner, when a mere accident led to his assassination. For the sake of security, the office of prætorian prefect had been divided between two commissioners, one for military affairs, the other for civil. The latter of these two officers was Opilius Macrinus. This man has, by some historians, been supposed to have harbored no bad intentions ; but, unfortunately, an astrologer had foretold that he was destined to the throne. The prophet was laid in irons at Rome, and letters were dispatched to Caracalla, apprising him of the case. These letters, as yet unopened, were transferred by the emperor, then occupied in witnessing a race, to Macrinus, who thus became acquainted with the whole grounds of suspicion against himself, — grounds which, to the jealousy of the emperor, he well knew would appear substantial proofs. Upon this he resolved to anticipate the emperor in the work of murder. The head-quarters were then at Edessa ; and upon his instigation, a disappointed centurion, named Martialis, animated also by revenge for the death of his brother, undertook to assassinate Caracalla. An opportunity soon offered, on a visit which the prince made to the celebrated temple of the moon at Carrhae. The attempt was successful : the emperor perished ; but Martialis paid the penalty of his crime in the same hour, being shot by a Scythian archer of the body-guard.

Macrinus, after three days' interregnum, being

lected emperor, began his reign by purchasing a peace from the Parthians. What the empire chiefly needed at this moment, is evident from the next step taken by this emperor. He labored to restore the ancient discipline of the armies in all its rigor. He was aware of the risk he ran in this attempt; and that he *was* so, is the best evidence of the strong necessity which existed for reform. Perhaps, however, he might have surmounted his difficulties and dangers, had he met with no competitor round whose person the military malcontents could rally. But such a competitor soon arose; and, to the astonishment of all the world, in the person of a Syrian. The Emperor Severus, on losing his first wife, had resolved to strengthen the pretensions of his family by a second marriage with some lady having a regal ‘genesis,’ that is, whose horoscope promised a regal destiny. Julia Domna, a native of Syria, offered him this dowry, and she became the mother of Geta. A sister of this Julia, called Mœsa, had, through two different daughters, two grandsons — Heliogabalus and Alexander Severus. The mutineers of the army rallied around the first of these; a battle was fought; and Macrinus, with his son Diadumenianus, whom he had adopted to the succession, were captured and put to death. Heliogabalus succeeded, and reigned in the monstrous manner which has rendered his name infamous in history. In what way, however, he lost the affections of the army, has never

been explained. His mother, Socemias, the eldest daughter of Mœsa, had represented herself as the concubine of Caracalla; and Heliogabalus, being thus accredited as the son of that emperor, whose memory was dear to the soldiery, had enjoyed the full benefit of that descent, nor can it be readily explained how he came to lose it.

Here, in fact, we meet with an instance of that dilemma which is so constantly occurring in the history of the Cæsars. If a prince is by temperament disposed to severity of manners, and naturally seeks to impress his own spirit upon the composition and discipline of the army, we are sure to find that he was cut off in his attempts by private assassination or by public rebellion. On the other hand, if he wallows in sensuality, and is careless about all discipline, civil or military, we then find as commonly that he loses the esteem and affections of the army to some rival of severer habits. And in the midst of such oscillations and with examples of such contradictory interpretation we cannot wonder that the Roman princes did no oftener take warning by the misfortunes of their predecessors. In the present instance, Alexander, the cousin of Heliogabalus, without intrigues of his own, and simply (as it appears) by the purity and sobriety of his conduct, had alienated the affections of the army from the reigning prince. Either jealousy or prudence had led Heliogabalus to make an attempt upon his

rival's life, and this attempt had nearly cost him his own through the mutiny which it caused. In a second uproar, produced by some fresh intrigues of the emperor against his cousin, the soldiers became unmanageable, and they refused to pause until they had massacred Heliogabalus, together with his mother, and raised his cousin Alexander to the throne.

The reforms of this prince, who reigned under the name of Alexander Severus, were extensive and searching; not only in his court, which he purged of all notorious abuses, but throughout the economy of the army. He cashiered, upon one occasion, an entire legion; he restored, as far as he was able, the ancient discipline; and, above all, he liberated the provinces from military spoliation. ‘Let the soldier,’ said he, ‘be contented with his pay; and whatever more he wants, let him obtain it by victory from the enemy, not by pillage from his fellow-subject.’ But whatever might be the value or extent of his reforms in the marching regiments, Alexander could not succeed in binding the prætorian guards to his yoke. Under the guardianship of his mother Mammæa, the conduct of state affairs had been submitted to a council of sixteen persons, at the head of which stood the celebrated Ulpian. To this minister the prætorians imputed the reforms, and perhaps the whole spirit of reform; for they pursued him with a vengeance which is else hardly to be explained. Many days was Ulpian protected by

the citizens of Rome, until the whole city was threatened with conflagration ; he then fled to the palace of the young emperor, who in vain attempted to save him from his pursuers under the shelter of the imperial purple. Ulpian was murdered before his eyes ; nor was it found possible to punish the ringleader in this foul conspiracy, until he had been removed by something like treachery to a remote government.

Meantime, a great revolution and change of dynasty had been effected in Parthia ; the line of the Arsacidae was terminated ; the Parthian empire was at an end ; and the sceptre of Persia was restored under the new race of the Sassanides. Artaxerxes, the first prince of this race, sent an embassy of four hundred select knights, enjoining the Roman emperor to content himself with Europe, and to leave Asia to the Persians. In the event of a refusal, the ambassadors were instructed to offer a defiance to the Roman prince. Upon such an insult, Alexander could not do less, with either safety or dignity, than to prepare for war. It is probable, indeed, that, by this expedition, which drew off the minds of the soldiery from brooding upon the reforms which offended them, the life of Alexander was prolonged. But the expedition itself was mismanaged, or was unfortunate. This result, however, does not seem chargeable upon Alexander. All the preparations were admirable on the march, and up to the enemy's frontier. The invasion it was, which, in a strategic

sense, seems to have been ill combined. Three armies were to have entered Persia simultaneously : one of these, which was destined to act on a flank of the general line, entangled itself in the marshy grounds near Babylon, and was cut off by the archery of an enemy whom it could not reach. The other wing, acting upon ground impracticable for the manœuvres of the Persian cavalry, and supported by Chosroes the king of Armenia, gave great trouble to Artaxerxes, and, with adequate support from the other armies, would doubtless have been victorious. But the central army, under the conduct of Alexander in person, discouraged by the destruction of one entire wing, remained stationary in Mesopotamia throughout the summer, and, at the close of the campaign, was withdrawn to Antioch, *re infectâ*. It has been observed that great mystery hangs over the operations and issue of this short war. Thus much, however, is evident, that nothing but the previous exhaustion of the Persian king saved the Roman armies from signal discomfiture ; and even thus there is no ground for claiming a victory (as most historians do) to the Roman arms. Any termination of the Persian war, however, whether glorious or not, was likely to be personally injurious to Alexander, by allowing leisure to the soldiery for recurring to their grievances. Sensible, no doubt, of this, Alexander was gratified by the occasion which then arose for repressing the hostile movements of the

Germans. He led his army off upon this expedition ; but their temper was gloomy and threatening ; and at length, after reaching the seat of war, at Mentz, an open mutiny broke out under the guidance of Maximin, which terminated in the murder of the emperor and his mother. By Herodian the discontents of the army are referred to the ill management of the Persian campaign, and the unpromising commencement of the new war in Germany. But it seems probable that a dissolute and wicked army, like that of Alexander, had not murmured under the too little, but the too much of military service ; not the buying a truce with gold seems to have offended them, but the having led them at all upon an enterprise of danger and hardship.

Maximin succeeded, whose feats of strength, when he first courted the notice of the Emperor Severus, have been described by Gibbon. He was at that period a Thracian peasant ; since then he had risen gradually to high offices ; but, according to historians, he retained his Thracian brutality to the last. That may have been true ; but one remark must be made upon this occasion ; Maximin was especially opposed to the senate ; and, wherever that was the case, no justice was done to an emperor. Why it was that Maximin would not ask for the confirmation of his election from the senate, has never been explained ; it is said that he anticipated a rejection. But, on the other hand, it seems probable that the senate supposed

its sanction to be despised. Nothing, apparently, but this reciprocal reserve in making approaches to each other, was the cause of all the bloodshed which followed. The two Gordians, who commanded in Africa, were set up by the senate against the new emperor; and the consternation of that body must have been great, when these champions were immediately overthrown and killed. They did not, however, despair: substituting the two governors of Rome, Pupienus and Balbinus, and associating to them the younger Gordian, they resolved to make a stand; for the severities of Maximin had by this time manifested that it was a contest of extermination. Meantime, Maximin had broken up from Sirmium, the capital of Pannonia, and had advanced to Aquileia,—that famous fortress, which in every invasion of Italy was the first object of attack. The senate had set a price upon his head; but there was every probability that he would have triumphed, had he not disgusted his army by immoderate severities. It was, however, but reasonable that those, who would not support the strict but equitable discipline of the mild Alexander, should suffer under the barbarous and capricious rigor of Maximin. That rigor was his ruin: sunk and degraded as the senate was, and now but the shadow of a mighty name, it was found on this occasion to have long arms when supported by the frenzy of its opponent. Whatever might be the real weakness of this body, the rude

soldiers yet felt a blind traditional veneration for its sanction, when prompting them as patriots to an act which their own multiplied provocations had but too much recommended to their passions. A party entered the tent of Maximin, and dispatched him with the same unpitying haste which he had shown under similar circumstances to the gentle-minded Alexander. Aquileia opened her gates immediately, and thus made it evident that the war had been personal to Maximin.

A scene followed within a short time which is in the highest degree interesting. The senate, in creating two emperors at once (for the boy Gordian was probably associated to them only by way of masking their experiment), had made it evident that their purpose was to restore the republic and its two consuls. This was their meaning ; and the experiment had now been twice repeated. The army saw through it; as to the double number of emperors, *that* was of little consequence, farther than as it expressed their intention, viz. by bringing back the consular government, to restore the power of the senate, and to abrogate that of the army. The prætorian troops, who were the most deeply interested in preventing this revolution, watched their opportunity, and attacked the two emperors in the palace. The deadly feud, which had already arisen between them, led each to suppose himself under assault from the other. The mistake was not of long duration Carried into the streets of Rome, they were

both put to death, and treated with monstrous indignities. The young Gordian was adopted by the soldiery. It seems odd that even thus far the guards should sanction the choice of the senate, having the purposes which they had ; but perhaps Gordian had recommended himself to their favor in a degree which might outweigh what they considered the original vice of his appointment, and his youth promised them an immediate impunity. This prince, however, like so many of his predecessors soon came to an unhappy end. Under the guardianship of the upright Misitheus, for a time he prospered ; and preparations were made upon a great scale for the energetic administration of a Persian war. But Misitheus died, perhaps by poison, in the course of the campaign ; and to him succeeded, as prætorian prefect, an Arabian officer, called Philip. The innocent boy, left without friends, was soon removed by murder ; and a monument was afterwards erected to his memory, at the junction of the Aboras and the Euphrates. Great obscurity, however, clouds this part of history ; nor is it so much as known in what way the Persian war was conducted or terminated.

Philip, having made himself emperor, celebrated, upon his arrival in Rome, the secular games, in the year 247 of the Christian era — that being the completion of a thousand years²³ from the foundation of Rome. But Nemesis was already on his steps. An insurrec-

tion had broken out amongst the legions stationed in Mœsia ; and they had raised to the purple some officer of low rank. Philip, having occasion to notice this affair in the senate, received for answer from Dectus, that probably, the pseudo-imperator would prove a mere evanescent phantom. This conjecture was confirmed ; and Philip in consequence conceived a high opinion of Decius, whom (as the insurrection still continued) he judged to be the fittest man for appeasing it. Decius accordingly went, armed with the proper authority. But on his arrival, he found himself compelled by the insurgent army to choose between empire and death. Thus constrained, he yielded to the wishes of the troops ; and then hastening with a veteran army into Italy, he fought the battle of Verona, where Philip was defeated and killed, whilst the son of Philip was murdered at Rome by the prætorian guards.

With Philip, ends, according to our distribution, the second series of the Cæsars, comprehending Commodus, Pertinax, Didius Julianus, Septimius, Severus, Caracalla and Geta, Macrinus, Heliogabalus, Alexander Severus, Maximin, the two Gordians, Pupienus and Balbinus, the third Gordian, and Philip the Arab.

In looking back at this series of Cæsars, we are horror-struck at the blood-stained picture. Well might a foreign writer, in reviewing the same succession,

declare, that it is like passing into a new world when the transition is made from this chapter of the human history to that of modern Europe. From Commodus to Decius are sixteen names, which, spread through a space of fifty-nine years, assign to each Cæsar a reign of less than four years. And Casaubon remarks, that, in one period of 160 years, there were seventy persons who assumed the Roman purple; which gives to each not much more than two years. On the other hand, in the history of France, we find that, through a period of 1200 years, there have been no more than sixty-four kings: upon an average, therefore, each king appears to have enjoyed a reign of nearly nineteen years. This vast difference in security is due to two great principles, — that of primogeniture as between son and son, and of hereditary succession as between a son and every other pretender. Well may we hail the principle of hereditary right as realizing the praise of Burke applied to chivalry, viz., that it is ‘the cheap defence of nations;’ for the security which is thus obtained, be it recollect, does not regard a small succession of princes, but the whole rights and interests of social man: since the contests for the rights of belligerent rivals do not respect themselves only, but very often spread ruin and proscription amongst all orders of men. The principle of hereditary succession, says one writer, had it been a discovery of any one individual, would deserve to be

considered as the very greatest ever made; and he adds acutely, in answer to the obvious, but shallow objection to it (viz., its apparent assumption of equal ability for reigning in father and son for ever), that it is like the Copernican system of the heavenly bodies, -- contradictory to our sense and first impressions, but true notwithstanding.

CHAPTER VI.

To return, however, to our sketch of the Cæsars. At the head of the third series we place Decius. He came to the throne at a moment of great public embarrassment. The Goths were now beginning to press southwards upon the empire. Dacia they had ravaged for some time; ‘and here,’ says a German writer, ‘observe the short-sightedness of the Emperor Trajan. Had he left the Dacians in possession of their independence, they would, under their native kings, have made head against the Goths. But, being compelled to assume the character of Roman citizens, they had lost their warlike qualities.’ From Dacia the Goths had descended upon Mœsia; and, passing the Danube, they laid siege to Marcianopolis, a city built by Trajan in honor of his sister. The inhabitants paid a heavy ransom for their town; and the Goths were persuaded for the present to return home. But sooner than was expected, they returned to Mœsia, under their king, Kniva; and they were already engaged in the siege of Nicopolis, when Decius came in sight at the head of the Roman army. The Goths retired, but it was to Thrace; and, in the conquest of Philippopolis, they found an ample indemnity for their forced retreat and

disappointment. Decius pursued, but the king of the Goths turned suddenly upon him ; the emperor was obliged to fly ; the Roman camp was plundered ; Philippopolis was taken by storm ; and its whole population, reputed at more than a hundred thousand souls, destroyed.

Such was the first great irruption of the barbarians into the Roman territory : and panic was diffused on the wings of the wind over the whole empire. Decius, however, was firm, and made prodigious efforts to restore the balance of power to its ancient condition. For the moment he had some partial successes. He cut off several detachments of Goths, on their road to reinforce the enemy ; and he strengthened the fortresses and garrisons of the Danube. But his last success was the means of his total ruin. He came up with the Goths at Forum Terebronii, and, having surrounded their position, their destruction seemed inevitable. A great battle ensued, and a mighty victory to the Goths. Nothing is now known of the circumstances, except that the third line of the Romans was entangled inextricably in a morass (as had happened in the Persian expedition of Alexander). Decius perished on this occasion — nor was it possible to find his dead body. This great defeat naturally raised the authority of the senate, in the same proportion as it depressed that of the army ; and by the will of that body, Hostilianus, a son of Decius, was raised to the

empire ; and ostensibly on account of his youth, but really with a view to their standing policy of restoring the consulate, and the whole machinery of the republic, Gallus, an experienced commander, was associated in the empire. But no skill or experience could avail to retrieve the sinking power of Rome upon the Illyrian frontier. The Roman army was disorganized, panic-stricken, reduced to skeleton battalions. Without an army, what could be done ? And thus it may really have been no blame to Gallus, that he made a treaty with the Goths more degrading than any previous act in the long annals of Rome. By the terms of this infamous bargain, they were allowed to carry off an immense booty, amongst which was a long roll of distinguished prisoners ; and Cæsar himself it was — not any lieutenant or agent that might have been afterwards disavowed — who volunteered to purchase their future absence by an annual tribute. The very army which had brought their emperor into the necessity of submitting to such abject concessions, were the first to be offended with this natural result of their own failures. Gallus was already ruined in public opinion, when further accumulations arose to his disgrace. It was now supposed to have been discovered, that the late dreadful defeat of Forum Terebronii was due to his bad advice ; and, as the young Hostilianus happened to die about this time of a contagious disorder, Gallus was charged with his murder. Even a ray of prosperity,

which just now gleamed upon the Roman arms, aggravated the disgrace of Gallus, and was instantly made the handle of his ruin. Æmilianus, the governor of Mœsia and Pannonia, inflicted some check or defeat upon the Goths ; and in the enthusiasm of sudden pride, upon an occasion which contrasted so advantageously for himself with the military conduct of Decius and Gallus, the soldiers of his own legion raised Æmilianus to the purple. No time was to be lost. Summoned by the troops, Æmilianus marched into Italy ; and no sooner had he made his appearance there, than the prætorian guards murdered the Emperor Gallus and his son Volusianus, by way of confirming the election of Æmilianus. The new emperor offered to secure the frontiers, both in the east and on the Danube, from the incursions of the barbarians. This offer may be regarded as thrown out for the conciliation of all classes in the empire. But to the senate in particular he addressed a message, which forcibly illustrates the political position of that body in those times. Æmilianus proposed to resign the whole civil administration into the hands of the senate, reserving to himself the only unenviable burthen of the military interests. His hope was, that in this way making himself in part the creation of the senate, he might strengthen his title against competitors at Rome, whilst the entire military administration going on under his own eyes, exclusively directed to that one object, would give him some chance

of defeating the hasty and tumultuary competitions so apt to arise amongst the legions upon the frontier. We notice the transaction chiefly as indicating the anomalous situation of the senate. Without power in a proper sense, or no more, however, than the indirect power of wealth, that ancient body retained an immense *auctoritas* — that is, an influence built upon ancient reputation, which, in their case, had the strength of a religious superstition in all Italian minds. This influence the senators exerted with effect, whenever the course of events had happened to reduce the power of the army. And never did they make a more continuous and sustained effort for retrieving their ancient power and place, together with the whole system of the republic, than during the period at which we are now arrived. From the time of Maximin, in fact, to the accession of Aurelian, the senate perpetually interposed their credit and authority, like some *Deus ex machinâ* in the dramatic art. And if this one fact were all that had survived of the public annals at this period, we might sufficiently collect the situation of the two other parties in the empire — the army and the emperor; the weakness and precarious tenure of the one, and the anarchy of the other. And hence it is that we can explain the hatred borne to the senate by vigorous emperors, such as Aurelian, succeeding to a long course of weak and troubled reigns. Such an emperor presumed in the senate, and not without

reason, the same spirit of domineering interference as ready to manifest itself, upon any opportunity offered, against himself, which, in his earlier days, he had witnessed so repeatedly in successful operation upon the fates and prospects of others.

The situation indeed of the world — that is to say, of that great centre of civilization, which, running round the Mediterranean in one continuous belt of great breadth, still composed the Roman Empire, was at this time most profoundly interesting. The crisis had arrived. In the East, a new dynasty (the Sassanides) had remoulded ancient elements into a new form, and breathed a new life into an empire, which else was gradually becoming crazy of age, and which, at any rate, by losing its unity, must have lost its vigor as an offensive power. Parthia was languishing and drooping as an anti-Roman state, when the last of the Arsacidæ expired. A perfect *Palingenesis* was wrought by the restorer of the Persian empire, which pretty nearly re-occupied (and gloried in re-occupying) the very area that had once composed the empire of Cyrus. Even this *Palingenesis* might have terminated in a divided empire: vigor might have been restored, but in the shape of a polyarchy (such as the Saxons established in England), rather than a monarchy; and in reality, at one moment that appeared to be a probable event. Now, had this been the course of the revolution, an alliance with one of these kingdoms would

nave tended to balance the hostility of another (as was in fact the case when Alexander Severus saved himself from the Persian power by a momentary alliance with Armenia). But all the elements of disorder had in that quarter re-combined themselves into severe unity: and thus was Rome, upon her eastern frontier, laid open to a new power of juvenile activity and vigor, just at the period when the languor of the decaying Parthian had allowed the Roman discipline to fall into a corresponding declension. Such was the condition of Rome upon her oriental frontier.⁶⁴ On the northern, it was much worse. Precisely at the crisis of a great revolution in Asia, which demanded in that quarter more than the total strength of the empire, and threatened to demand it for ages to come, did the Goths, under their earliest denomination of *Getæ*, with many other associate tribes, begin to push with their horns against the northern gates of the empire; the whole line of the Danube, and, pretty nearly about the same time, of the Rhine, (upon which the tribes from Swabia, Bavaria, and Franconia, were beginning to descend,) now became insecure; and these two rivers ceased in effect to be the barriers of Rome. Taking a middle point of time between the Parthian revolution and the fatal overthrow of Forum Terebronii, we may fix upon the reign of Philip the Arab [who naturalized himself in Rome by the appellation of Marcus Julius] as the epoch from which the Roman

empire, already sapped and undermined by changes from within, began to give way, and to dilapidate from without. And this reign dates itself in the series by those ever-memorable secular or jubilee games, which celebrated the completion of the thousandth year from the foundation of Rome.⁶⁵

Resuming our sketch of the Imperial history, we may remark the natural embarrassment which must have possessed the senate, when two candidates for the purple were equally earnest in appealing to *them*, and their deliberate choice, as the best foundation for a valid election. Scarcely had the ground been cleared for Æmilianus by the murder of Gallus and his son, when Valerian, a Roman senator, of such eminent merit, and confessedly so much the foremost noble in all the qualities essential to the very delicate and comprehensive functions of a Censor,⁶⁶ that Decius had revived that office expressly in his behalf, entered Italy at the head of the army from Gaul. He had been summoned to his aid by the late emperor, Gallus; but arriving too late for his support, he determined to avenge him. Both Æmilianus and Valerian recognized the authority of the senate, and professed to act under that sanction; but it was the soldiery who cut the knot, as usual, by the sword. Æmilianus was encamped at Spoleto; but as the enemy drew near, his soldiers, shrinking no doubt from a contest with veteran troops made their peace by murdering the new emperor, and

Valerian was elected in his stead. The prince was already an old man at the time of his election ; but he lived long enough to look back upon the day of his inauguration as the blackest in his life. Memorable were the calamities which fell upon himself, and upon the empire, during his reign. He began by associating to himself his son Gallienus ; partly, perhaps, for his own relief, partly to indulge the senate in their steady plan of dividing the imperial authority. The two emperors undertook the military defence of the empire, Gallienus proceeding to the German frontier, Valerian to the eastern. Under Gallienus, the Franks began first to make themselves heard of. Breaking into Gaul, they passed through that country and Spain ; captured Tarragona in their route ; crossed over to Africa, and conquered Mauritania. At the same time, the Alemanni, who had been in motion since the time of Caracalla, broke into Lombardy, across the Rhætian Alps. The senate, left without aid from either emperors, were obliged to make preparations for the common defence against this host of barbarians. Luckily, the very magnitude of the enemy's success, by overloading him with booty, made it his interest to retire without fighting ; and the degraded senate, hanging upon the traces of their retiring footsteps, without fighting, or daring to fight, claimed the honors of a victory. Even then, however, they did more than was agreeable to the jealousies of Gallienus, who, by an edict, publicly

rebuked their presumption, and forbade them in future to appear amongst the legions, or to exercise any military functions. He himself, meanwhile, could devise no better way of providing for the public security, than by marrying the daughter of his chief enemy, the king of the Marcomanni. On this side of Europe, the barbarians were thus quieted for the present ; but the Goths of the Ukraine, in three marauding expeditions of unprecedented violence, ravaged the wealthy regions of Asia Minor, as well as the islands of the Archipelago : and at length, under the guidance of deserters, landed in the port of the Pyræus. Advancing from this point, after sacking Athens and the chief cities of Greece, they marched upon Epirus, and began to threaten Italy. But the defection at this crisis of a conspicuous chieftain, and the burden of their booty, made these wild marauders anxious to provide for a safe retreat ; the imperial commanders in Mœsia listened eagerly to their offers : and it set the seal to the dishonors of the State, that, after having traversed so vast a range of territory almost without resistance, these blood-stained brigands were now suffered to retire under the very guardianship of those whom they had just visited with military execution.

Such were the terms upon which the Emperor Gallienus purchased a brief respite from his haughty enemies. For the moment, however, he *did* enjoy security. Far otherwise was the destiny of his un-

nappy father. Sapor now ruled in Persia ; the throne of Armenia had vainly striven to maintain its independence against his armies, and the daggers of his hired assassins. This revolution, which so much enfeebled the Roman means of war, exactly in that proportion increased the necessity for it. War, and that instantly, seemed to offer the only chance for maintaining the Roman name or existence in Asia. Carrhæ and Nisibis, the two potent fortresses in Mesopotamia, had fallen ; and the Persian arms were now triumphant on both banks of the Euphrates. Valerian was not of a character to look with indifference upon such a scene, terminated by such a prospect ; prudence and temerity, fear and confidence, all spoke a common language in this great emergency ; and Valerian marched towards the Euphrates with a fixed purpose of driving the enemy beyond that river. By whose mismanagement the records of history do not enable us to say, some think of Macrianus, the prætorian prefect, some of Valerian himself, but doubtless by the treachery of guides co-operating with errors in the general, the Roman army was entangled in marshy grounds ; partial actions followed and skirmishes of cavalry, in which the Romans became direfully aware of their situation ; retreat was cut off, to advance was impossible ; and to fight was now found to be without hope. In these circumstances, they offered to capitulate. But the haughty Sapor would hear of nothing

but unconditional surrender; and to that course the unhappy emperor submitted. Various traditions have been preserved by history concerning the fate of Valerian; all agree that he died in misery and captivity; but some have circumstantiated this general statement by features of excessive misery and degradation, which possibly were added afterwards by scenical romancers, in order to heighten the interest of the tale, or by ethical writers, in order to point and strengthen the moral. Gallienus now ruled alone, except as regarded the restless efforts of insurgents, thirty of whom are said to have arisen in his single reign. This, however is probably an exaggeration. Nineteen such rebels are mentioned by name: of whom the chief were Calpurnius Piso, a Roman senator; Tetricus, a man of rank who claimed a descent from Pompey, Crassus, and even from Numa Pompilius, and maintained himself some time in Gaul and Spain; Trebellianus, who founded a republic of robbers in Isauria which survived himself by centuries; and Odenathus, the Syrian. Others were mere *Terræ filii*, or adventurers, who flourished and decayed in a few days or weeks, of whom the most remarkable was a working armorer named Marius. Not one of the whole number eventually prospered, except Odenathus; and he, though originally a rebel, yet, in consideration of services performed against Persia, was suffered to retain his power, and to transmit his kingdom of Palmyra⁶⁸ to his

widow Zenobia. He was even complimented with the title of Augustus. All the rest perished. Their rise, however, and local prosperity at so many different points of the empire, showed the distracted condition of the State, and its internal weakness. That again proclaimed its external peril. No other cause had called forth this diffusive spirit of insurrection than the general consciousness, so fatally warranted, of the debility which had emasculated the government, and its incompetency to deal vigorously with the public enemies.¹³ The very granaries of Rome, Sicily and Egypt, were the seats of continued distractions; in Alexandria, the second city of the empire, there was even a civil war which lasted for twelve years. Weakness, dissension and misery, were spread like a cloud over the whole face of the empire.

The last of the rebels who directed his rebellion personally against Gallienus was Aureolus. Passing the Rhætian Alps, this leader sought out and defied the emperor. He was defeated, and retreated upon Milan; but Gallienus, in pursuing him, was lured into an ambuscade, and perished from the wound inflicted by an archer. With his dying breath he is said to have recommended Claudio to the favor of the senate; and at all events Claudio it was who succeeded. Scarcely was the new emperor installed, before he was summoned to a trial not only arduous in itself, but terrific by the very name of the enemy. The Goths of the

Ukraine, in a new armament of six thousand vessels, had again descended by the Bosphorus into the south, and had sat down before Thessalonica, the capital of Macedonia. Claudius marched against them with the determination to vindicate the Roman name and honor: ‘Know,’ said he, writing to the senate, ‘that 320,000 Goths have set foot upon the Roman soil. Should I conquer them, your gratitude will be my reward. Should I fall, do not forget who it is that I have succeeded; and that the republic is exhausted.’ No sooner did the Goths hear of his approach, than, with transports of ferocious joy, they gave up the siege, and hurried to annihilate the last pillar of the empire. The mighty battle which ensued, neither party seeking to evade it, took place at Naissus. At one time the legions were giving way, when suddenly, by some happy manœuvre of the emperor, a Roman corps found its way to the rear of the enemy. The Goths gave way, and their defeat was total. According to most accounts they left 50,000 dead upon the field. The campaign still lingered, however, at other points, until at last the emperor succeeded in driving back the relics of the Gothic host into the fastnesses of the Balkan;⁷⁰ and there the greater part of them died of hunger and pestilence. These great services performed, within two years from his accession to the throne, by the rarest of fates, the Emperor Claudius died in his bed at Sirmium, the capital of Pannonia. His brother

Quintilius, who had a great command at Aquileia, immediately resumed the purple ; but his usurpation lasted only seventeen days, for the last emperor, with a single eye to the public good, had recommended Aurelian as his successor, guided by his personal knowledge of that general's strategic qualities. The army of the Danube confirmed the appointment ; and Quintilius committed suicide. Aurelian was of the same harsh and forbidding character as the Emperor Severus : he had, however, the qualities demanded by the times ; energetic and not amiable princes were required by the exigencies of the state. The hydra-headed Goths were again in the field on the Illyrian quarter : Italy itself was invaded by the Alemanni ; and Tetricus, the rebel, still survived as a monument of the weakness of Gallienus. All these enemies were speedily repressed, or vanquished, by Aurelian. But it marks the real declension of the empire, a declension which no personal vigor in the emperor was now sufficient to disguise, that, even in the midst of victory, Aurelian found it necessary to make a formal surrender, by treaty, of that Dacia which Trajan had united with so much ostentation to the empire. Europe was now again in repose ; and Aurelian found himself at liberty to apply his powers as a re-organizer and restorer to the East. In that quarter of the world a marvellous revolution had occurred. The little oasis of Palmyra, from a Roman colony, had grown into the leading

province of a great empire. This island of the desert, together with Syria and Egypt, formed an independent monarchy under the sceptre of Zenobia.⁷¹ After two battles lost in Syria, Zenobia retreated to Palmyra. With great difficulty⁷² Aurelian pursued her; and with still greater difficulty he pressed the siege of Palmyra. Zenobia looked for relief from Persia; but at that moment Sapor died, and the Queen of Palmyra fled upon a dromedary, but was pursued and captured. Palmyra surrendered and was spared; but unfortunately, with a folly which marks the haughty spirit of the place unfitted to brook submission, scarcely had the conquering army retired when a tumult arose, and the Roman garrison was slaughtered. Little knowledge could those have had of Aurelian's character, who tempted him to acts but too welcome to his cruel nature by such an outrage as this. The news overtook the emperor on the Hellespont. Instantly, without pause, 'like Até hot from hell,' Aurelian retraced his steps — reached the guilty city — and consigned it, with all its population, to that utter destruction from which it has never since risen. The energetic administration of Aurelian had now restored the empire — not to its lost vigor, that was impossible — but to a condition of repose. That was a condition more agreeable to the empire than to the emperor. Peace was hateful to Aurelian; and he sought for war, where it could seldom be sought in vain, upon the Persian

frontier. But he was not destined to reach the Euphrates; and it is worthy of notice, as a providential ordinance, that his own unmerciful nature was the ultimate cause of his fate. Anticipating the emperor's severity in punishing some errors of his own, Mucassor, a general officer, in whom Aurelian placed especial confidence, assassinated him between Byzantium and Heraclea. An interregnum of eight months succeeded, during which there occurred a contest of a memorable nature. Some historians have described it as strange and surprising. To us, on the contrary, it seems that no contest could be more natural. Heretofore the great strife had been in what way to secure the reversion or possession of that great dignity; whereas now the rivalship lay in declining it. But surely such a competition had in it, under the circumstances of the empire, little that can justly surprise us. Always a post of danger, and so regularly closed by assassination, that in a course of two centuries there are hardly to be found three or four cases of exception, the imperial dignity had now become burdened with a public responsibility which exacted great military talents, and imposed a perpetual and personal activity. Formerly, if the emperor knew himself to be surrounded with assassins, he might at least make his throne, so long as he enjoyed it, the couch of a voluptuary. The '*ave imperator!*' was then the summons, if to the supremacy in passive danger so

also to the supremacy in power, and honor, and enjoyment. But now it was a summons to never-ending tumults and alarms ; an injunction to that sort of vigilance without intermission, which, even from the poor sentinel, is exacted only when on duty. Not Rome, but the frontier; not the *aurea domus*, but a camp, was the imperial residence. Power and rank, whilst in that residence, could be had in no larger measure by Cæsar *as* Cæsar, than by the same individual as a military commander-in-chief; and, as to enjoyment, *that* for the Roman imperator was now extinct. Rest there could be none for him. Battle was the tenure by which he held his office; and beyond the range of his trumpet's blare, his sceptre was a broken reed. The office of Cæsar at this time resembled the situation (as it is sometimes described in romances) of a knight who had achieved the favor of some capricious lady, with the present possession of her castle and ample domains, but which he holds under the known and accepted condition of meeting all challenges whatsoever offered at the gate by wandering strangers, and also of jousting at any moment with each and all amongst the inmates of the castle. As often as a wish may arise to benefit by the chances in disputing his supremacy.

It is a circumstance, moreover, to be noticed in the aspect of the Roman monarchy at this period, that the pressure of the evils we are now considering, applied

to this particular age of the empire beyond all others, as being an age of transition from a greater to an inferior power. Had the power been either greater or conspicuously less, in that proportion would the pressure have been easier, or none at all. Being greater, for example, the danger would have been repelled to a distance so great that mere remoteness would have disarmed its terrors, or otherwise it would have been violently overawed. Being less, on the other hand, and less in an eminent degree, it would have disposed all parties, as it did at an after period, to regular and formal compromises in the shape of fixed annual tributes. At present the policy of the barbarians along the vast line of the northern frontier, was, to tease and irritate the provinces which they were not entirely able, or prudentially unwilling, to dismember. Yet, as the almost annual irruptions were at every instant ready to be converted into *coup-de-mains* upon Aquileia — upon Verona — or even upon Rome itself, unless vigorously curbed at the outset, — each emperor at this period found himself under the necessity of standing in the attitude of a champion or *propugnator* on the frontier line of his territory — ready for all comers — and with a pretty certain prospect of having one pitched battle at the least to fight in every successive summer. There were nations abroad at this epoch in Europe who did not migrate occasionally, or occasionally project themselves upon the civilized portion of the globe,

but who made it their steady regular occupation to do so, and lived for no other purpose. For seven hundred years the Roman Republic might be styled a republic militant; for about one century further it was an empire triumphant; and now, long retrograde, it had reached that point at which again, but in a different sense, it might be styled an empire militant. Originally it had militated for glory and power; now its militancy was for mere existence. War was again the trade of Rome, as it had been once before; but in that earlier period war had been its highest glory; now it was its dire necessity.

Under this analysis of the Roman condition, need we wonder, with the crowd of unreflecting historians, that the senate, at the era of Aurelian's death, should dispute amongst each other — not as once, for the possession of the sacred purple, but for the luxury and safety of declining it? The sad pre-eminence was finally imposed upon Tacitus, a senator who traced his descent from the historian of that name, who had reached an age of seventy-five years, and who possessed a fortune of three millions sterling.⁷³ Vainly did the agitated old senator open his lips to decline the perilous honor; five hundred voices insisted upon the necessity of his compliance; and thus, as a foreign writer observes, was the descendant of him, whose glory it had been to signalize himself as the hater of despotism, under the absolute necessity of becoming in his own person, a despot.

The aged senator then was compelled to be emperor, and forced, in spite of his vehement reluctance, to quit the comforts of a palace, which he was never to revisit, for the hardships of a distant camp. His first act was strikingly illustrative of the Roman condition, as we have just described it. Aurelian had attempted to disarm one set of enemies by turning the current of their fury upon another. The Alani were in search of plunder, and strongly disposed to obtain it from Roman provinces. ‘But no,’ said Aurelian; ‘if you do that I shall unchain my legions upon you. Be better advised: keep those excellent dispositions of mind, and that admirable taste for plunder, until you come whither I will conduct you. Then discharge your fury and welcome; besides which, I will pay you wages for your immediate abstinence; and on the other side the Euphrates you shall pay yourselves.’ Such was the outline of the contract; and the Alani had accordingly held themselves in readiness to accompany Aurelian from Europe to his meditated Persian campaign. Meantime, that emperor had perished by treason; and the Alani were still waiting for his successor on the throne to complete his engagements with themselves, as being of necessity the successor also to his wars and to his responsibilities. It happened, from the state of the empire, as we have sketched it above, that Tacitus really *did* succeed to the military plans of Aurelian. The Persian expedition was or-

dained to go forward ; and Tacitus began, as a preliminary step in that expedition, to look about for his good allies the barbarians. Where might they be, and how employed ? Naturally, they had long been weary of waiting. The Persian booty might be good after *its* kind ; but it was far away ; and, *en attendant*, Roman booty was doubtless good after *its* kind. And so, throughout the provinces of Cappadocia, Pontus, &c., as far as the eye could stretch, nothing was to be seen but cities and villages in flames. The Roman army hungered and thirsted to be unmuzzled and slipped upon these false friends. But this, for the present, Tacitus would not allow. He began by punctually fulfilling all the terms of Aurelian's contract, — a measure which barbarians inevitably construed into the language of fear. But then came the retribution. Having satisfied public justice, the emperor now thought of vengeance ; he unchained his legions : a brief space of time sufficed for a long course of vengeance : and through every outlet of Asia Minor the Alani fled from the wrath of the Roman soldier. Here, however, terminated the military labors of Tacitus : he died at Tyana in Cappadocia, as some say, from the effects of the climate of the Caucasus, co-operating with irritations from the insolence of the soldiery : but, as Zosimus and Zonoras expressly assure us, under the murderous hands of his own troops. His brother Florianus at first usurped the purple, by the aid of the

Illyrian army; but the choice of other armies, afterwards confirmed by the senate, settled upon Probus, a general already celebrated under Aurelian. The two competitors drew near to each other for the usual decision by the sword, when the dastardly supporters of Florian offered up their chosen prince as a sacrifice to his antagonist. Probus, settled in his seat, addressed himself to the regular business of those times,—to the reduction of insurgent provinces, and the liberation of others from hostile molestations. Isauria and Egypt he visited in the character of a conqueror, Gaul in the character of a deliverer. From the Gaulish provinces he chased in succession the Franks, the Burgundians, and the Lygians. He pursued the intruders far into their German thickets; and nine of the native German princes came spontaneously into his camp, subscribed such conditions as he thought fit to dictate, and complied with his requisitions of tribute in horses and provisions. This, however, is a delusive gleam of Roman energy, little corresponding with the true condition of the Roman power, and entirely due to the *personal* qualities of Probus. Prebus himself showed his sense of the true state of affairs, by carrying a stone wall, of considerable height, from the Danube to the Neckar. He made various attempts also to effect a better distribution of barbarous tribes, by dislocating their settlements, and making extensive translations of their clans, according to the circumstances of those times. These

arrangements, however, suggested often by short-sighted views, and carried into effect by mere violence, were sometimes defeated visibly at the time, and, doubtless, in very few cases accomplished the ends proposed. In one instance, where a party of Franks had been transported into the Asiatic province of Pontus, as a column of defence against the intrusive Alani, being determined to revisit their own country, they swam the Hellespont, landed on the coasts of Asia Minor and of Greece, plundered Syracuse, steered for the Straits of Gibraltar, sailed along the shores of Spain and Gaul, passing finally through the English Channel and the German Ocean, right onwards to the Frisic and Batavian coasts, where they exultingly rejoined their exulting friends. Meantime, all the energy and military skill of Probus could not save him from the competition of various rivals. Indeed, it must then have been felt, as by us who look back on those times it is now felt, that, amidst so continued a series of brief reigns, interrupted by murders, scarcely an idea could arise answering to our modern ideas of treason and usurpation. For the ideas of fealty and allegiance, as to a sacred and anointed monarch, could have no time to take root. Candidates for the purple must have been viewed rather as military rivals than as traitors to the reigning Cæsar. And hence the reason for the right resistance which was often experienced by the seducers of armies. Probus, however, as acci-

dent in his case ordered it, subdued all his personal opponents,—Saturninus in the East, Proculus and Bonoses in Gaul. For these victories he triumphed in the year 281. But his last hour was even then at hand. One point of his military discipline, which he brought back from elder days, was, to suffer no idleness in his camps. He it was who, by military labor, transferred to Gaul and to Hungary the Italian vine, to the great indignation of the Italian monopolist. The culture of vineyards, the laying of military roads, the draining of marshes, and similar labors, perpetually employed the hands of his stubborn and contumacious troops. On some work of this nature the army happened to be employed near Sirmium, and Probus was looking on from a tower, when a sudden frenzy of disobedience seized upon the men: a party of the mutineers ran up to the emperor, and with a hundred wounds laid him instantly dead. We are told by some writers that the army was immediately seized with remorse for its own act; which, if truly reported, rather tends to confirm the image, otherwise impressed upon us of the relations between the army and Cæsar, as pretty closely corresponding with those between some fierce wild beast and its keeper; the keeper, if not uniformly vigilant as an argus, is continually liable to fall a sacrifice to the wild instincts of the brute, mastering at intervals the reverence and fear under which it has been habitually trained. In this case, both the murderer.

ing impulse and the remorse seem alike the effects of a brute instinct, and to have arisen under no guidance of rational purpose or reflection. The person who profited by this murder was Carus, the captain of the guard, a man of advanced years, and a soldier, both by experience and by his propensities. He was proclaimed emperor by the army; and on this occasion there was no further reference to the senate, than by a dry statement of the facts for its information. Troubling himself little about the approbation of a body not likely in any way to affect his purposes (which were purely martial, and adapted to the tumultuous state of the empire), Carus made immediate preparations for pursuing the Persian expedition,—so long promised, and so often interrupted. Having provided for the security of the Illyrian frontier by a bloody victory over the Sarmatians, of whom we now hear for the first time, Carus advanced towards the Euphrates; and from the summit of a mountain he pointed the eyes of his eager army upon the rich provinces of the Persian empire. Varanes, the successor of Artaxerxes, vainly endeavored to negotiate a peace. From some unknown cause, the Persian armies were not at this juncture disposable against Carus: it has been conjectured by some writers that they were engaged in an Indian war. Carus, it is certain, met with little resistance. He insisted on having the Roman supremacy acknowledged as a preliminary to any

treaty ; and, having threatened to make Persia as bare as his own skull, he is supposed to have kept his word with regard to Mesopotamia. The great cities of Ctesiphon and Seleucia he took ; and vast expectations were formed at Rome of the events which stood next in succession, when, on Christmas day, 283, a sudden and mysterious end overtook Carus and his victorious advance. The story transmitted to Rome was, that a great storm, and a sudden darkness, had surprised the camp of Carus ; that the emperor, previously ill, and reposing in his tent, was obscured from sight ; that at length a cry had arisen, — ‘The emperor is dead !’ and that, at the same moment, the imperial tent had taken fire. The fire was traced to the confusion of his attendants ; and this confusion was imputed by themselves to grief for their master’s death. In all this it is easy to read pretty circumstantially a murder committed on the emperor by corrupted servants, and an attempt afterwards to conceal the indications of murder by the ravages of fire. The report propagated through the army, and at that time received with credit, was, that Carus had been struck by lightning : and that omen, according to the Roman interpretation, implied a necessity of retiring from the expedition. So that, apparently, the whole was a bloody intrigue, set on foot for the purpose of counteracting the emperor’s resolution to prosecute the war. His son Numerian succeeded to the rank of emperor by the choice of the

army. But the mysterious faction of murderers were still at work. After eight months' march from the Tigris to the Thracian Bosphorus, the army halted at Chalcedon. At this point of time a report arose suddenly, that the Emperor Numerian was dead. The impatience of the soldiery would brook no uncertainty; they rushed to the spot; satisfied themselves of the fact; and, loudly denouncing as the murderer Aper, the captain of the guard, committed him to custody, and assigned to Dioclesian, whom at the same time they invested with the supreme power, the duty of investigating the case. Dioclesian acquitted himself of this task in a very summary way, by passing his sword through the captain before he could say a word in his defence. It seems that Dioclesian, having been promised the empire by a prophetess as soon as he should have killed a wild boar [Aper], was anxious to realize the omen. The whole proceeding has been taxed with injustice so manifest, as not even to seek a disguise. Meantime, it should be remembered that, *first*, Aper, as the captain of the guard, was answerable for the emperor's safety; *secondly*, that his anxiety to profit by the emperor's murder was a sure sign that he had participated in that act; and, *thirdly*, that the assent of the soldiery to the open and public act of Dioclesian, implies a conviction on their part of Aper's guilt. Here let us pause, having now arrived at the fourth and last group of the Cæsars, to

notice the changes which had been wrought by time, co-operating with political events, in the very nature and constitution of the imperial office.

If it should unfortunately happen, that the palace of the Vatican, with its thirteen thousand⁷⁴ chambers, were to take fire—for a considerable space of time the fire would be retarded by the mere enormity of extent which it would have to traverse. But there would come at length a critical moment, at which the *maximum* of the retarding effect having been attained, the bulk and volume of the flaming mass would thenceforward assist the flames in the rapidity of their progress. Such was the effect upon the declension of the Roman empire from the vast extent of its territory. For a very long period that very extent, which finally became the overwhelming cause of its ruin, served to retard and to disguise it. A small encroachment, made at any one point upon the integrity of the empire was neither much regarded at Rome, nor perhaps in and for itself much deserved to be regarded. But a very narrow belt of encroachments, made upon almost *every* part of so enormous a circumference, was sufficient of itself to compose something of an antagonist force. And to these external dilapidations, we must add the far more important dilapidations from within, affecting all the institutions of the State, and all the forces, whether moral or political, which had originally raised it or maintained it. Causes which had been

latent in the public arrangements ever since the time of Augustus, and had been silently preying upon its vitals, had now reached a height which would no longer brook concealment. The fire which had smouldered through generations had broken out at length into an open conflagration. Uproar and disorder, and the anarchy of a superannuated empire, strong only to punish and impotent to defend, were at this time convulsing the provinces in every point of the compass Rome herself had been menaced repeatedly. And a still more awful indication of the coming storm had been felt far to the south of Rome. One long wave of the great German deluge had stretched beyond the Pyrenees and the Pillars of Hercules, to the very soil of Ancient Carthage. Victorious banners were already floating on the margin of the Great Desert, and they were *not* the banners of Cæsar. Some vigorous hand was demanded at this moment, or else the funeral knell of Rome was on the point of sounding. Indeed, there is every reason to believe that, had the imbecile Carinus (the brother of Numerian) succeeded to the command of the Roman armies at this time, or any other than Dioclesian, the Empire of the West would have fallen to pieces within the next ten years.

Dioclesian was doubtless that man of iron whom the times demanded; and a foreign writer has gone so far as to class him amongst the greatest of men, if he

were not even himself the greatest. But the position of Dioclesian was remarkable beyond all precedent, and was alone sufficient to prevent his being the greatest of men, by making it necessary that he should be the most selfish. For the case stood thus: If Rome were in danger, much more so was Cæsar. If the condition of the empire were such that hardly any energy or any foresight was adequate to its defence, for the emperor, on the other hand, there was scarcely a possibility that he should escape destruction. The chances were in an overbalance against the empire; but for the emperor there was no chance at all. He shared in all the hazards of the empire; and had others so peculiarly pointed at himself, that his assassination was now become as much a matter of certain calculation, as seed time or harvest, summer or winter, or any other revolution of the seasons. The problem, therefore, for Dioclesian was a double one,—so to provide for the defence and maintenance of the empire, as simultaneously (and, if possible, through the very same institution) to provide for the personal security of Cæsar. This problem he solved, in some imperfect degree, by the only expedient perhaps open to him in that despotism, and in those times. But it is remarkable, that, by the revolution which he effected, the office of Roman Imperator was completely altered, and Cæsar became henceforwards an Oriental Sultan or Padishah. Augustus, when moulding for his future

purposes the form and constitution of that supremacy, which he had obtained by inheritance and by arms, proceeded with so much caution and prudence, that even the style and title of his office was discussed in council as a matter of the first moment. The principle of his policy was to absorb into his own functions all those high offices which conferred any real power to balance or to control his own. For this reason he appropriated the tribunitian power; because that was a popular and representative office, which, as occasions arose, would have given some opening to democratic influences. But the consular office he left untouched; because all its power was transferred to the imperator, by the entire command of the army, and by the new organization of the provincial governments.⁷⁵ And in all the rest of his arrangements, Augustus had proceeded on the principle of leaving as many openings to civic influences, and impressing upon all his institutions as much of the old Roman character, as was compatible with the real and substantial supremacy established in the person of the emperor. Neither is it at all certain, as regarded even this aspect of the imperial office, that Augustus had the purpose, or so much as the wish, to annihilate all collateral power, and to invest the chief magistrate with absolute irresponsibility. For himself, as called upon to restore a shattered government, and out of the anarchy of civil wars to recombine the elements of power into some

shape better fitted for duration (and, by consequence, for insuring peace and protection to the world) than the extinct republic, it might be reasonable to seek such an irresponsibility. But, as regarded his successors, considering the great pains he took to discourage all manifestations of princely arrogance, and to develop, by education and example, the civic virtues of patriotism and affability in their whole bearing towards the people of Rome, there is reason to presume that he wished to remove them from popular control, without, therefore, removing them from popular influence.

Hence it was, and from this original precedent of Augustus, aided by the constitution which he had given to the office of imperator, that up to the era of Dioclesian, no prince had dared utterly to neglect the senate, or the people of Rome. He might hate the senate, like Severus, or Aurelian; he might even meditate their extermination, like the brutal Maximin. But this arose from any cause rather than from contempt. He hated them precisely because he feared them, or because he paid them an involuntary tribute of superstitious reverence, or because the malice of a tyrant interpreted into a sort of treason the rival influence of the senate over the minds of men. But, before Dioclesian, the undervaluing of the senate, or the harshest treatment of that body, had arisen from views which were *personal* to the individual Cæsar. It was now made to arise from the very constitution of the office.

and the mode of the appointment. To defend the empire, it was the opinion of Dioclesian that a single emperor was not sufficient. And it struck him, at the same time, that by the very institution of a plurality of emperors, which was now destined to secure the integrity of the empire, ample provision might be made for the personal security of each emperor. He carried his plan into immediate execution, by appointing an associate to his own rank of Augustus in the person of Maximian — an experienced general ; whilst each of them in effect multiplied his own office still farther by severally appointing a Cæsar, or hereditary prince. And thus the very same partition of the public authority, by means of a duality of emperors, to which the senate had often resorted of late, as the best means of restoring their own republican aristocracy, was now adopted by Dioclesian as the simplest engine for overthrowing finally the power of either senate or army to interfere with the elective privilege. This he endeavoured to centre in the existing emperors ; and, at the same moment, to discourage treason or usurpation generally, whether in the party choosing or the party chosen, by securing to each emperor, in the case of his own assassination, an avenger in the person of his surviving associate, as also in the persons of the two Cæsars, or adopted heirs and lieutenants. The associate emperor, Maximian, together with the two Cæsars — Galerius appointed by himself, and Constantius

Chlorus by Maximian — were all bound to himself by ties of gratitude ; all owing their stations ultimately to his own favor. And these ties he endeavored to strengthen by other ties of affinity ; each of the Augusti having given his daughter in marriage to his own adopted Cæsar. And thus it seemed scarcely possible that an usurpation should be successful against so firm a league of friends and relations.

The direct purposes of Dioclesian were but imperfectly attained ; the internal peace of the empire lasted only during his own reign ; and with his abdication of the empire commenced the bloodiest civil wars which has desolated the world since the contests of the great triumvirate. But the collateral blow, which he meditated against the authority of the senate, was entirely successful. Never again had the senate any real influence on the fate of the world. And with the power of the senate expired concurrently the weight and influence of Rome. Dioclesian is supposed never to have seen Rome, except on the single occasion when he entered it for the ceremonial purpose of a triumph. Even for that purpose it ceased to be a city of resort ; for Dioclesian's was the final triumph. And, lastly, even as the chief city of the empire for business or for pleasure, it ceased to claim the homage of mankind ; the Cæsar was already born whose destiny it was to cashier the metropolis of the world, and to appoint her successor. This also may be regarded in

effect as the ordinance of Dioclesian; for he, by his long residence at Nicomedia, expressed his opinion pretty plainly, that Rome was not central enough to perform the functions of a capital to so vast an empire; that this was one cause of the declension now become so visible in the forces of the State; and that some city, not very far from the Hellespont or the Ægean Sea, would be a capital better adapted by position to the exigencies of the times.

But the revolutions effected by Dioclesian did not stop here. The simplicity of its republican origin had so far affected the external character and expression of the imperial office, that in the midst of luxury the most unbounded, and spite of all other corruptions, a majestic plainness of manners, deportment, and dress, had still continued from generation to generation, characteristic of the Roman imperator in his intercourse with his subjects. All this was now changed; and for the Roman was substituted the Persian dress, the Persian style of household, a Persian court, and Persian manners. A diadem, or tiara beset with pearls, now encircled the temples of the Roman Augustus; his sandals were studded with pearls, as in the Persian court; and the other parts of his dress were in harmony with these. The prince was instructed no longer to make himself familiar to the eyes of men. He sequestered himself from his subjects in the recesses of his palace. None, who sought him, could any

longer gain easy admission to his presence. It was a point of his new duties to be difficult of access; and they who were at length admitted to an audience, found him surrounded by eunuchs, and were expected to make their approaches by genuflexions, by servile 'adorations,' and by real acts of worship as to a visible god.

It is strange that a ritual of court ceremonies, so elaborate and artificial as this, should first have been introduced by a soldier, and a warlike soldier like Dioclesian. This, however, is in part explained by his education and long residence in Eastern countries. But the same eastern training fell to the lot of Constantine, who was in effect his successor;⁷³ and the Oriental tone and standard established by these two emperors, though disturbed a little by the plain and military bearing of Julian, and one or two more emperors of the same breeding, finally re-established itself with undisputed sway in the Byzantine court.

Meantime the institutions of Dioclesian, if they had destroyed Rome and the senate as influences upon the course of public affairs, and if they had destroyed the Roman features of the Cæsars, do, notwithstanding, appear to have attained one of their purposes, in limiting the extent of imperia. murders. Travelling through the brief list of the remaining Cæsars, we perceive a little more security for life; and hence the successions are less rapid. Constantine, who (like

Aaron's rod) had swallowed up all his competitors *seriatim*, left the empire to his three sons; and the last of these most unwillingly to Julian. That prince's Persian expedition, so much resembling in rashness and presumption the Russian campaign of Napoleon, though so much below it in the scale of its tragic results, led to the short reign of Jovian (or Jovinian), which lasted only seven months. Upon his death succeeded the house of Valentinian,⁷⁷ in whose descendant, of the third generation, the empire, properly speaking, expired. For the seven shadows who succeeded, from Avitus and Majorian to Julius Nepos and Romulus Augustulus, were in no proper sense Roman emperors,—they were not even emperors of the West,—but had a limited kingdom in the Italian peninsula. Valentinian the Third was, as we have said, the **last emperor of the West**.

But, in a fuller and ampler sense, recurring to what we have said of Dioclesian and the tenor of his great revolutions, we may affirm that Probus and Carus were the final representatives of the majesty of Rome: for they reigned over the whole empire, not yet incapable of sustaining its own unity; and in them were still preserved, not yet obliterated by oriental effeminacy, those majestic features which reflected republican consuls, and, through them, the senate and people of Rome. That, which had offended Dioclesian in the condition of the Roman emperors, was the **grandes**

feature of their dignity. It is true that the peril of the office had become intolerable; each Cæsar submitted to his sad inauguration with a certainty, liable even to hardly any disguise from the delusions of youthful hope, that for him, within the boundless empire which he governed, there was no coast of safety, no shelter from the storm, no retreat, except the grave, from the dagger of the assassin. Gibbon has described the hopeless condition of one who should attempt to fly from the wrath of the almost omnipresent emperor. But this dire impossibility of escape was in the end dreadfully retaliated upon the emperor; persecutors and traitors were found everywhere: and the vindictive or the ambitious subject found himself as omnipresent as the jealous or the offended emperor.

The crown of the Cæsars was therefore a crown of thorns; and it must be admitted, that never in this world have rank and power been purchased at so awful a cost in tranquillity and peace of mind. The steps of Cæsar's throne were absolutely saturated with the blood of those who had possessed it: and so inexorable was that murderous fate which overhung that gloomy eminence, that at length it demanded the spirit of martyrdom in him who ventured to ascend it. In these circumstances, some change was imperatively demanded. Human nature was no longer equal to the terrors which it was summoned to face. But the changes of Dioclesian transmuted that golden sceptre

into a base oriental allcy. They left nothing behind of what had so much challenged the veneration of man: for it was in the union of republican simplicity with the irresponsibility of illimitable power — it was in the antagonism between the merely human and approachable condition of Cæsar as a man, and his divine supremacy as a potentate and king of kings — that the secret lay of his unrivalled grandeur. This perished utterly under the reforming hands of Dioclesian. Cæsar only it was that could be permitted to extinguish Cæsar: and a Roman imperator it was who, by remodelling, did in affect abolish, by exorcising from its foul terrors, did in effect disenchant of its sanctity, that imperial dignity, which having once perished, could have no second existence, and which was undoubtedly the sublimest incarnation of power, and a monument the mightiest of greatness built by human hands, which upon this planet has been suffered to appear.

CICERO.

IN drawing attention to a great question of whatso-ever nature connected with Cicero, there is no danger of missing our purpose through any want of reputed interest in the subject. *Nominally*, it is not easy to assign a period more eventful, a revolution more important, or a personal career more dramatic, than that period — that revolution — that career — which with almost equal right, we may describe as all essentially *Ciceronian*, by the quality of the interest which they excite. For the age, it was fruitful in great men; but amongst them all, if we except the sublime Julian leader, none as regards splendor of endowments stood upon the same level as Cicero. For the revolution, it was that unique event which brought ancient civilization into contact and commerce with modern; since if we figure the two worlds of Paganism and Christianity under the idea of two great continents, it is through the isthmus of Rome imperialized that the one was virtually communicated with the other. Civil law and Christianity, the two central forces of modern civilization, were upon that isthmus of time ripened into potent establishments. And through those two establishments, combined with the antique literature, as through so many organs of

metempsychosis, did the pagan world pass onwards, whatever portion of its own life was fitted for surviving its own peculiar forms. Yet, in a revolution thus unexampled for grandeur of results, the only great actor who stood upon the authority of his character was Cicero. All others, from Pompey, Curio, Domitius, Cato, down to the final partisans at Actium, moved by the authority of arms ; ‘*tantum auctoritatem valebant, quantum milite :*’ and they could have moved by no other. Lastly, as regards the persona biography, although the same series of trials, perils, and calamities, would have been in any case interesting for themselves, yet undeniably they derive a separate power of affecting the mind from the peculiar merits of the individual concerned. Cicero is one of the very few pagan statesmen who can be described as a thoughtfully conscientious man.

It is not, therefore, any want of splendid attraction in our subject from which we are likely to suffer. It is of this very splendor that we complain, as having long ago defeated the simplicities of truth, and pre-occupied the minds of all readers with ideas politically romantic. All tutors, schoolmasters, academic authorities, together with the collective *corps* of editors, critics, commentators, have a natural bias in behalf of a literary man, who did so much honor to literature, and who, in all the storms of this difficult life, manifested so much attachment to the pure literary interest. Readers of sensibility acknowledge the effect from any large influence of deep halcyon repose, when relieving the agitations of history ; as, for example, that which arises in our domestic annals from interposing between two bloody reigns, like

those of Henry VIII. and his daughter Mary, the serene morning of a childlike king, destined to an early grave, yet in the meantime occupied with benign counsels for propagating religion or for protecting the poor. Such a repose, the same luxury of rest for the mind, is felt by all who traverse the great circumstantial records of those tumultuous Roman times, viz. the Ciceronian epistolary correspondence. Upon coming suddenly into deep lulls of angry passions — here, upon some scheme for the extension of literature by a domestic history, or by a comparison of Greek with Roman jurisprudence ; there, again, upon some ancient problem from the quiet fields of philosophy — literary men are already prejudiced in favor of one who, in the midst of belligerent partisans, was the patron of intellectual interest. But amongst Christian nations this prejudice has struck deeper : Cicero was not merely a philosopher ; he was one who cultivated ethics ; he was himself the author of an ethical system, composed with the pious purpose of training to what he thought just moral views his only son. This system survives, is studied to this day, is honored perhaps extravagantly, and has repeatedly been pronounced the best practical theory to which pagan principles were equal. Were it only upon this impulse, it was natural that men should receive a *clinamen*, or silent bias, towards Cicero, as a moral authority amongst disputants whose arguments were legions. The author of a moral code cannot be supposed indifferent to the moral relations of his own party views. If he erred, it could not be through want of meditation upon the ground of judgment, or want of interest in the results So far

Cicero has an advantage. But he has more lively advantage in the comparison by which he benefits, at *every* stage of his life, with antagonists whom the reader is taught to believe dissolute, incendiary, almost desperate citizens. Verres in the youth of Cicero, Catiline and Clodius in his middle age, Mark Antony in his old age, have all been left to operate on the modern reader's feelings precisely through that masquerade of misrepresentation which invariably accompanied the political eloquence of Rome. The monstrous caricatures from the forum, or the senate, or the democratic rostrum, which were so *confessedly* distortions, by original design, for attaining the ends of faction, have imposed upon scholars pretty generally as faithful portraits. Recluse scholars are rarely politicians; and in the timid horror of German literati, at this day, when they read of real brickbats and paving-stones, not metaphorical, used as figures of speech by a Clodian mob, we British understand the little comprehension of that rough horse-play proper to the hustings, which can yet be available for the rectification of any continental judgment. ‘*Play, do you call it?*’ says a German commentator; ‘why **that** brickbat might break a man’s leg; and this paving-stone would be sufficient to fracture a skull.’ Too true: they certainly might do so. But, for all that, our British experience of electioneering ‘rough-and-tumbling’ has long blunted the edge of our moral anger. Contested elections are unknown to the continent — hitherto even to those nations of the continent which boast of representative governments. And with no experience of their inconveniences, they have as yet none of the popular forces in which such contests

originate. We, on the other hand, are familiar with such scenes. What Rome saw upon one sole hustings, we see repeated upon hundreds. And we all know that the bark of electioneering mobs is worse than their bite. Their fury is without malice, and their insurrectionary violence is without system. Most undoubtedly the mobs and seditions of Clodius are entitled to the same benefits of construction. And with regard to the graver charges against Catiline or Clodius, as men sunk irredeemably into sensual debaucheries, these are exaggerations which have told only from want of attention to Roman habits. Such charges were the standing material, the stock in trade of every orator against every antagonist. Cicero, with the same levity as every other public speaker, tossed about such atrocious libels at random. And with little blame where there was really no discretion allowed. Not *are they true?* but *will they tell?* was the question. Insolvency and monstrous debauchery were the two ordinary reproaches on the Roman hustings. No man escaped them who was rich enough, or had expectations notorious enough, to win for such charges any colorable plausibility. Those only were unmolested in this way who stood in no man's path of ambition; or who had been obscure (that is to say, poor) in youth; or who, being splendid by birth or connections, had been notoriously occupied in distant campaigns. The object in such calumnies was, to produce a momentary effect upon the populace: and sometimes, as happened to Caesar, the merest falsehoods of a partisan orator were adopted subsequently for truths by the simple-minded soldiery. But the misapprehension of these libels in modern times origi-

nates in erroneous appreciation of Roman oratory. Scandal was its proper element. Senate or law-tribunal, forum or mob rostrum, made no difference in the licentious practice of Roman eloquence. And, unfortunately, the calumnies survive; whilst the state of things, which made it needless to notice them in reply, has entirely perished. During the transitional period between the old Roman frugality and the luxury succeeding to foreign conquest, a reproach of this nature would have stung with some severity; and it was not without danger to a candidate. But the age of growing voluptuousness weakened the effect of such imputations; and this age may be taken to have commenced in the youth of the Gracchi, about one hundred years before Pharsalia. The change in the direction of men's sensibilities since then, was as marked as the change in their habits. Both changes had matured themselves in Cicero's days; and one natural result was, that few men of sense valued such reproaches, (incapable, from their generality, of specific refutation,) whether directed against friends or enemies. Cæsar, when assailed for the thousandth time by the old fable about Nicomedes the sovereign of Bithynia, no more troubled himself to expose its falsehood in the senate, than when previously dispersed over Rome through the libellous *facetiae* of Catullus. He knew that the object of such petty malice was simply to tease him; and for himself to lose any temper, or to manifest anxiety, by a labor so hopeless as any effort towards the refutation of an unlimited scandal, was childishly to collude with his enemies. He treated the story, therefore, as if it had been true; and showed that, even under that

assumption, it would not avail for the purpose before the house. Subsequently, Suetonius, as an express collector of anecdote and pointed personalities against great men, has revived many of these scurrilous jests; but *his* authority, at the distance of two generations, can add nothing to the credit of calumnies originally founded on plebeian envy, or the jealousy of rivals. We may possibly find ourselves obliged to come back upon this subject. And at this point, therefore, we will not further pursue it than by remarking, that no one snare has proved so fatal to the sound judgment of posterity upon public men in Rome, as this blind credulity towards the oratorical billingsgate of ancient forensic license, or of *παρογνωμα* electioneering. Libels, whose very point and jest lay in their extravagance, have been received for historical truth with respect to many amongst Cicero's enemies. And the reaction upon Cicero's own character has been naturally to exaggerate that imputed purity of morals, which has availed to raise him into what is called a 'pattern man.'

The injurious effect upon biographic literature of all such wrenches to the truth, is diffused everywhere. Fenelon, or Howard the philanthropist, may serve to illustrate the effect we mean, when viewed in relation to the stern simplicity of truth. Both these men have long been treated with such uniformity of dissimulation, 'petted' (so to speak) with such honeyed falsehoods as beings too bright and seraphic for human inquisition, that now their real circumstantial merits, quite as much as their human frailties, have faded away in this blaze of fabling idolatry. Sir Isaac Newton, again, for about one entire century since his death in 1727, was

painted by all biographers as a man so saintly in temper — so meek — so detached from worldly interest, that by mere strength of patent falsehood, the portrait had ceased to be human, and a great man's life furnished no interest to posterity. At length came the odious truth, exhibiting Sir Isaac in a character painful to contemplate, as a fretful, peevish, and sometimes even malicious, intriguer ; traits, however, in Sir Isaac already traceable in the sort of chicanery attending his subornation of managers in the Leibnitz controversy, and the publication of the *Commercium Epistolicum*. For the present, the effect has been purely to shock and to perplex. As regards moral instruction, the lesson comes too late ; it is now defeated by its inconsistency with our previous training in steady theatrical delusion.

We do not make it a reproach to Cicero, that his reputation with posterity has been affected by these or similar arts of falsification. Eventually this has been his misfortune. Adhering to the truth, his indiscreet eulogists would have presented to the world a much more interesting picture ; not so much the representation of '*vir bonus cum malâ fortunâ compositus*,' which is, after all, an ordinary spectacle for so much of the conflict as can ever be made public ; but that of a man generally upright, matched as in single duel with a standing temptation to error, growing out of his public position ; often seduced into false principles by the necessities of ambition, or by the coercion of self-consistency ; and often, as he himself admits, biased finally in a public question by the partialities of friendship. The violence of that crisis was overwhelming to all moral sensibilities ; no sense, no organ, remained

true to the obligations of political justice ; principles and feelings were alike darkened by the extremities of the political quarrel ; the feelings obeyed the personal engagements ; and the principles indicated only the position of the individual — as between the senate struggling for interests and the democracy struggling for rights.

So far nothing has happened to Cicero which does not happen to all men entangled in political feuds. There are few cases of large party dispute which do not admit of contradictory delineations, as the mind is previously swayed to this extreme or to that. But the peculiarity in the case of Cicero is — not that he has benefited by the mixed quality or the doubtfulness of that cause which he adopted, but that the very dubious character of the cause has benefited by *him*. Usually it happens, that the individual partisan is sheltered under the authority of *his* cause. But here the whole merits of the cause have been predetermined and adjudged by the authority of the partisan. Had Cicero been absent, or had Cicero practised that neutrality to which he often inclined, the general verdict of posterity on the great Roman civil war would have been essentially different from that which we find in history. At present the error is an extreme one ; and we call it such without hesitation, because it has maintained itself by imperfect reading, even of such documents as survive, and by too general an oblivion of the important fact, that these surviving documents (meaning the *contemporary* documents) are pretty nearly all *ex parte*.¹⁵

To judge of the general equity in the treatment of Cicero, considered as a political partisan, let us turn to

the most current of the regular biographies. Amongst the infinity of slighter sketches, which naturally draw for their materials upon those which are most elaborate, it would be useless to confer a special notice upon any. We will cite the two which at this moment stand foremost in European literature — that of Conyers Middleton, now about one century old, as the memoir most generally read ; that of Bernhardt Abeken,⁷⁹ (amongst that limited class of memoirs which build upon any political principles,) accidentally the latest.

Conyers Middleton is a name that cannot be mentioned without an expression of disgust. We sit down in perfect charity, at the same table, with sceptics in every degree. To us, simply in his *social* character, and supposing him sincere, a sceptic is as agreeable as another. Anyhow he is better than a craniologist, than a punster, than a St. Simonian, than a Jeremy-Bentham-cock, or an anti-corn-law lecturer. What signifies a name ? Free-thinker he calls himself ? Good — let him ‘ free think ’ as fast as he can ; but let him obey the ordinary laws of good faith. No sneering in the first place, because, though it is untrue that ‘ a sneer cannot be answered,’ the answer too often imposes circumlocution. And upon a subject which makes wise men grave, a sneer argues so much perversion of heart, that it cannot be thought uncandid to infer some corresponding perversion of intellect. Perfect sincerity never existed in a professional sneerer ; secondly, no treachery, no betrayal of the cause which the man is sworn and paid to support. Conyers Middleton held considerable preferment in the church of England. Long after he had become an enemy to that church, (not separately for itself, but generally as

a strong form of Christianity,) he continued to receive large quarterly cheques upon a bank in Lombard-street, of which the original condition had been that he should defend Christianity ‘with all his soul and with all his strength.’ Yet such was his perfidy to this sacred engagement, that even his private or personal feuds grew out of his capital feud with the Christian faith. From the church he drew his bread ; and the labor of his life was to bring the church into contempt. He hated Bentley, he hated Warburton, he hated Waterland ; and why ? all alike as powerful champions of that religion which he himself daily betrayed ; and Waterland, as the strongest of these champions, he hated most. But all these bye-currents of malignity emptied themselves into one vast *cloaca maxima* of rancorous animosity to the mere spirit, temper, and tendencies, of Christianity. Even in treason there is room for courage ; but Middleton, in the manner, was as cowardly as he was treacherous in the matter. He wished to have it whispered about that he was worse than he seemed, and that he would be a *fort esprit* of a high cast, but for the bigotry of his church. It was a fine thing, he fancied, to have the credit of infidelity, without paying for a license ; to sport over those manors without a qualification. As a scholar, meantime, he was trivial and incapable of labor. Even the Roman antiquities, political or juristic, he had studied neither by research and erudition, nor by meditation on their value and analogies. Lastly, his English style, for which at one time he obtained some credit through the caprice of a fashionable critic, is such, that by weeding away from it whatever is colloquial, you would strip it of all that is characteristic : remov-

ing its idiomatic vulgarisms, you would remove its principle of animation.

That man misapprehends the case, who fancies that the infidelity of Middleton can have but a limited operation upon a memoir of Cicero. On the contrary, because this prepossession was rather a passion of hatred⁸⁰ than any aversion of the intellect, it operated as a false bias universally; and in default of any sufficient analogy between Roman politics, and the politics of England at Middleton's time of publication, there was no other popular bias derived from modern ages, which could have been available. It was the object of Middleton to paint, in the person of Cicero, a pure Pagan model of scrupulous morality; and to show that, in most difficult times, he had acted with a self-restraint and a considerate integrity, to which Christian ethics could have added no element of value. Now this object had the effect of, already in the preconception, laying a restraint over all freedom in the execution. No man could start from the assumption of Cicero's uniform uprightness, and afterwards retain any latitude of free judgment upon the most momentous transaction of Cicero's life: because, unless some plausible hypothesis could be framed for giving body and consistency to the pretences of the Pompean cause, it must, upon any examination, turn out to have been as merely a selfish cabal, for the benefit of a few ordly families, as ever yet has prompted a conspiracy. The slang words '*respublica*' and '*causa*,' are caught up by Middleton from the letters of Cicero; but never, in any one instance, has either Cicero or a modern commentator, been able to explain what general interest of the Roman people was represented by these

vague abstractions. The strife, at that era, was not between the conservative instinct as organized in the upper classes, and the destroying instinct as concentrated in the lowest. The strife was not between the property of the nation and its rapacious pauperism — the strife was not between the honors, titles, institutions, created by the state and the plebeian malice of levellers, seeking for a commencement *de novo*, with the benefits of a general scramble — it was a strife between a small faction of confederated oligarchs upon the one hand, and the nation upon the other. Or, looking still more narrowly into the nature of the separate purposes at issue, it was, on the Julian side, an attempt to make such a re-distribution of constitutional functions, as should harmonize the necessities of the public service with the working of the republican machinery. Whereas, under the existing condition of Rome, through the silent changes of time, operating upon the relations of property and upon the character of the populace, it had been long evident that armed supporters — now legionary soldiers, now gladiators — enormous bribery, and the constant reserve of anarchy in the rear, were become the *regular* counters for conducting the desperate game of the more ordinary civil administration. Not the demagogue only, but the peaceful or patriotic citizen, and the constitutional magistrate, could now move and exercise their public functions only through the deadliest combinations of violence and fraud. This dreadful condition of things, which no longer acted through that salutary opposition of parties, essential to the energy of free countries, but involved all Rome in a permanent panic, was acceptable to the senate only.

and of the senate, in sincerity, to a very small section some score of great houses there was, that by vigilance of intrigues, by far-sighted arrangements for armed force or for critical retreat, and by overwhelming command of money, could always guarantee their own domination. For this purpose, all that they needed was a secret understanding with each other, and the interchange of mutual pledges by means of marriage alliances. Any revolution which should put an end to this anarchy of selfishness, must reduce the exorbitant power of the paramount grandees. They naturally confederated against a result so shocking to their pride. Cicero, as a new member of this faction, himself rich⁸¹ in a degree sufficient for the indefinite aggrandizement of his son, and sure of support from all the interior cabal of the senators, had adopted their selfish sympathies. And it is probable enough that all changes in a system which worked so well for himself, to which also he had always looked up from his youngest days as the reward and haven of his toils, did seriously strike him as dreadful innovations. Names were now to be altered for the sake of things; forms for the sake of substances: this already gave some *verbal* power of delusion to the senatorial faction. And a prospect still more startling to them all, was the necessity towards any restoration of the old republic, that some one eminent grandee should hold provisionally a dictatorial power during the period of transition.

Abeken — and it is honorable to him as a scholar of a section not conversant with politics — saw enough into the situation of Rome at that time, to be sure that Cicero was profoundly in error upon the capital point

of the dispute; that is, in mistaking a cabal for the commonwealth, and the narrowest of intrigues for a public ‘cause.’ Abeken, like an honest man, had sought for any national interest cloaked by the wordy pretences of Pompey, and he had found none. He had seen the necessity towards any regeneration of Rome, that Cæsar, or some leader pursuing the same objects, should be armed for a time with extraordinary power. In that way only had both Marius and Sylla each in the same *general* circumstances, though with different feelings, been enabled to preserve Rome from total anarchy. We give Abeken’s express words that we may not seem to tax him with any responsibility beyond what he courted. At p. 342, (8th sect.) he owns it as a rule of the sole conservative policy possible for Rome:—‘Dass Cæsar der einzige war, der ohne weitere stuerme, Rom zu dem ziele zu fuehren vermochte, welchem es seit einem jahrhundert sich zuwendete;’ that Cæsar was the sole man who had it in his power, without further convulsions, to lead Rome onwards to that final mark, towards which, in tendency, she had been travelling throughout one whole century. Neither could it be of much consequence whether Cæsar should personally find it safe to imitate the example of Sylla in laying down his authority, provided he so matured the safeguards of the reformed constitution, that, on the withdrawal of this temporary scaffolding, the great arch was found capable of self-support. Thus far, as an ingenious student of Cicero’s correspondence, Abeken gains a glimpse of the truth which has been so constantly obscured by historians. But, with the natural incapacity for practical politics which besieges all Germans, he

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fails in most of the subordinate cases to decipher the intrigues at work, and oftentimes finds special palliation for Cicero's conduct, where, in reality, it was but a reiteration of that selfish policy in which he had united himself with Pompey.

By way of slightly reviewing this policy, as it expressed itself in the acts or opinions of Pompey, we will pursue it through the chief stages of the contest. Where was it that Cicero first heard the appalling news of a civil war inevitable? It was at Ephesus; at the moment of reaching that city on his return homewards from his proconsular government in Cilicia, and the circumstances of his position were these. On the last day of July, 703, *Ab Urb. Cond.*, he had formally entered on that office. On the last day but one of the same month in 704, he laid it down. The conduct of Cicero in this command was meritorious. And, if our purpose had been generally to examine his merits, we could show cause for making a higher estimate of those merits than has been offered by his professional eulogists. The circumstances, however, in the opposite scale, ought not to be overlooked. He knew himself to be under a jealous supervision from the friends of Verres, or all who might have the same interest. This is one of the two facts which may be pleaded in abatement of his disinterested merit. The other is, that, after all, he did undeniably pocket a large sum of money (more than twenty thousand pounds) upon his year's administration; whilst, on the other hand, the utmost extent of that sum by which he refused to profit was *not* large. This at least we are entitled to say with regard to the only specific sum brought under our notice, as *certainly*, awaiting his private disposal.

Here occurs a very important error of Middleton's. The question of money very much will turn upon the specific amount. An abstinence which is exemplary may be shown in resisting an enormous gain ; whereas under a slight temptation the abstinence may be little or none. Middleton makes the extravagant, almost maniacal, assertion, that the sum available by custom as a perquisite to Cicero's suite was ' eight hundred thousand pounds sterling.' Not long after the period in which Middleton wrote, newspapers and the increased facilities for travelling in England, had begun to operate powerfully upon the character of our English universities. Rectors and students, childishly ignorant of the world, (such as Parson Adams and the Vicar of Wakefield,) became a rare class. Possibly Middleton was the last clergyman of that order ; though, in any good sense, having little enough of guileless simplicity. In our own experience we have met with but one similar case of heroic ignorance. This occurred near Caernarvon. A poor Welsh woman, leaving home to attend an annual meeting of the Methodists, replied to us who had questioned her as to the numerical amount of members likely to assemble ?— ' That perhaps there would be a matter of four millions ! ' This in little Caernarvon, that by no possibility could accommodate as many thousands ! Yet, in justice to the poor cottager, it should be said that she spoke doubtingly, and with an anxious look, whereas Middleton announces this little *bonus* of eight hundred thousand pounds with a glib fluency that demonstrates him to have seen nothing in the amount worth a comment. Let the reader take with him these little adjuncts of the case. First of all, the money

was a mere *surplus* arising on the public expenditure, and resigned in any case to the suite of the governor, only under the presumption that it must be too trivial to call for any more deliberate appropriation. Secondly, it was the surplus of a *single* year's expenditure. Thirdly, the province itself was chiefly Grecian in the composition of its population ; that is, poor, in a degree not understood by most Englishmen, frugally penurious in its habits. Fourthly, the public service was of the very simplest nature. The administration of justice, and the military application of about eight thousand regular troops to the local seditions of the Isaurian freebooters, or to the occasional sallies from the Parthian frontier — these functions of the proconsul summed up his public duties. To us the marvel is, how there could arise a surplus even equal to eight thousand pounds, which some copies countenance. Eight pounds we should have surmised. But to justify Middleton, he ought to have found in the text '*millies*' — a reading which exists nowhere. Figures, in such cases, are always so suspicious as scarcely to warrant more than a slight bias to the sense which they establish : and words are little better, since they may always have been derived from a previous authority in figures. Meantime, simply as a blunder in accurate scholarship, we should think it unfair to have pressed it. But it is in the light of an evidence against Middleton's good sense and thoughtfulness that we regard it as capital. The man who *could* believe that a sum not far from a million sterling had arisen in the course of twelve months, as a little bagatelle of office, a *pot-de-vin*, mere customary fees, payable to the discretionary allotment of one who held the most fleeting relation to

the province, is not entitled to an opinion upon any question of doubtful tenor. Had this been the scale of regular profits upon a poor province, why should any Verres create risk for himself by an arbitrary scale?

In cases, therefore, where the merit turns upon money, unavoidably the ultimate question will turn upon the amount. And the very terms of the transaction, as they are reported by Cicero, indicating that the sum was entirely at his own disposal, argue its trivial value. Another argument implies the same construction. Former magistrates, most of whom took such offices with an express view to the creation of a fortune by embezzlement and by bribes, had established the precedent of relinquishing this surplus to their official 'family.' This fact of itself shows that the amount must have been uniformly trifling: being at all subject to fluctuations in the amount, most certainly it would have been made to depend for its appropriation upon the separate merits of each annual case as it came to be known. In this particular case, Cicero's suite grumbled a little at his decision: he ordered that the money should be carried to the credit of the public. But, had a sum so vast as Middleton's been disposable in mere perquisites, *proh deum atque hominum fidem!* the honorable gentlemen of the suite would have taken unpleasant liberties with the proconsular throat. They would have been entitled to divide on the average forty thousand pounds a man; and they would have married into senatorian houses. Because a score or so of monstrous fortunes existed in Rome, we must not forget that in any age of the Republic a sum of twenty-five thousand pounds would have con-

stituted a most respectable fortune for a man not embarked upon a public career; and with sufficient connections it would furnish the early costs even for such a career.

We have noticed this affair with some minuteness, both from its importance to the accuser of Verres, and because we shall here have occasion to insist on this very case, as amongst those which illustrate the call for political revolution at Rome. Returning from Cicero the governor to Cicero the man, we may remark, that, although his whole life had been adapted to purposes of ostentation, and *à fortiori* this particular provincial interlude was sure to challenge from his enemies a vindictive scrutiny, still we find cause to think Cicero very sincere in his purity as a magistrate. Many of his acts were not mere showy renunciations of doubtful privileges; but were connected with painful circumstances of offence to intimate friends. Indirectly we may find in these cases a pretty ample violation of the Roman morals. Pretended philosophers in Rome who prated in set books about ‘virtue’ and the ‘summum bonum,’ made no scruple, in the character of magistrates, to pursue the most extensive plans of extortion, through the worst abuses of military license; some, as the ‘virtuous’ Marcus Brutus, not stopping short of murder—a foul case of this description had occurred in the previous year under the sanction of Brutus, and Cicero had to stand his friend in nobly refusing to abet the further prosecution of the very same atrocity. Even in the case of the perquisites, as stated above, Cicero had a more painful duty than that of merely sacrificing a small sum of money—he was summoned by his conscience to offend those

men with whom he lived, as a modern prince or ambassador lives amongst the members of his official ‘family.’ Naturally it could be no trifle to a gentle-hearted man, that he was creating for himself a necessity of encountering frowns from those who surrounded him, and who might think, with some reason, that in bringing them to a distant land, he had authorized them to look for all such remunerations as precedent had established. Right or wrong in the casuistical point — we believe him to have been wrong — Cicero was eminently right when once satisfied by arguments, sound or not sound as to the point of duty, in pursuing that duty through all the vexations which it entailed. This justice we owe him pointedly in a review which has for its general object the condemnation of his political conduct.

Never was a child, torn from its mother’s arms to an odious school, more homesick at this moment than was Cicero. He languished for Rome; and when he stood before the gates of Rome, about five months later, not at liberty to enter them, he sighed profoundly after the vanished peace of mind which he had enjoyed in his wild mountainous province. ‘*Quæsivit Iucem — ingemuitque repartam.*’ Vainly he flattered himself that he could compose, by his single mediation, the mighty conflict which had now opened. As he pursued his voyage homewards, through the months of August, September, October, and November, he was met, at every port where he touched for a few days’ repose, by reports, more and more gloomy, of the impending rupture between the great partisan leaders. These reports ran along, like the undulations of an earthquake, to the last recesses of the east

Every king and every people had been canvassed for the coming conflict ; and many had been already associated by pledges to the one side or the other. The fancy faded away from Cicero's thoughts as he drew nearer to Italy, that any effect could now be anticipated for mediatorial counsels. The controversy, indeed, was still pursued through diplomacy ; and the negotiations had not reached an *ultimatum* from either side. But Cicero was still distant from the parties ; and, before it was possible that any general congress representing both interests, could assemble, it was certain that reciprocal distrust would coerce them into irrevocable measures of hostility. Cicero landed at Otranto. He went forward by land to Brundusium, where, on the 25th of November, his wife and daughter, who had come forward from Rome to meet him, entered the public square of that town at the same moment with himself. Without delay he moved forward towards Rome ; but he could not gratify his ardor for a personal interference in the great crisis of the hour, without entering Rome ; and *that* he was not at liberty to do, without surrendering his pretensions to the honor of a triumph.

Many writers have amused themselves with the idle vanity of Cicero, in standing upon a claim so windy, under circumstances so awful. But, on the one hand, it should be remembered how eloquent a monument it was of civil grandeur, for a *novus homo* to have established his own amongst the few surviving triumphal families of Rome ; and, on the other hand, he could have effected nothing by his presence in the senate. No man could at this moment ; Cicero least of all : because his policy had been thus arranged — ultimately

to support Pompey ; but in the meantime, as strengthening the chances against war, to exhibit a perfect neutrality. Bringing, therefore, nothing in his counsels, he could hope for nothing influential in the result. Cæsar was now at Ravenna, as the city nearest to Rome of all which he could make his military headquarters within the Italian (*i. e.* the Cisalpine) province of Gaul. But he held his forces well in hand, and ready for a start, with his eyes literally fixed on the walls of Rome, so near had he approached. Cicero warned his friend Atticus, that a dreadful and perfectly unexampled war — a struggle ‘of life and death’ — was awaiting them ; and that in his opinion nothing could avert it, short of a great Parthian invasion, deluging the Eastern provinces — Greece, Asia Minor, Syria — such as might force the two chieftains into an instant distraction of their efforts. Out of that would grow the absence of one or other ; and upon that separation, for the present, might hang an incalculable series of changes. Else, and but for this one contingency, he announced the fate of Rome to be sealed.

The new year came, the year 705, and with it new consuls. One of these, C. Marcellus, was distinguished amongst the enemies of Cæsar by his personal rancor — a feeling which he shared with his twin-brother Marcus. In the first day of this month, the senate was to decide upon Cæsar’s proposals, as a basis for future arrangement. They did so ; they voted the proposals, by a large majority, unsatisfactory — instantly assumed a fierce martial attitude — fulminated the most hostile of all decrees, and authorized shocking outrages upon those who, in official situations

represented Cæsar's interest. These men fled for their lives. Cæsar, on receiving their report, gave the signal for advance; and in forty-eight hours had crossed the little brook called the Rubicon, which determined the marches or frontier line of his province. Earlier by a month than this great event, Cicero had travelled southward. Thus his object was, to place himself in personal communication with Pompey, whose vast Neapolitan estates drew him often into that quarter. But, to his great consternation, he found himself soon followed by the whole stream of Roman grandes, flying before Cæsar through the first two months of the year. A majority of the senators had chosen, together with the consuls, to become emigrants from Rome, rather than abide any compromise with Cæsar. And, as these were chiefly the rich and potent in the aristocracy, naturally they drew along with themselves many humble dependents, both in a pecuniary and a political sense. A strange rumor prevailed at this moment, to which even Cicero showed himself maliciously credulous, that Cæsar's natural temper was cruel, and that his policy also had taken that direction. But the brilliant result within the next six or seven weeks changed the face of politics, disabused everybody of their delusions, and showed how large a portion of the panic had been due to monstrous misconceptions. For already, in March, multitudes of refugees had returned to Cæsar. By the first week of April, that 'monster of energy,' (that *τερας* of superhuman despatch,) as Cicero repeatedly styles Cæsar, had marched through Italy — had received the submission of every strong fortress — had driven Pompey into his last Calabrian retreat of Brundusium, (at which point

it was that this unhappy man unconsciously took his last farewell of Italian ground) — had summarily kicked him out of Brundusium — and, having thus cleared all Italy of enemies, was on his road back to Rome. From this city, within the first ten days of April, he moved onwards to the Spanish war, where, in reality, the true strength of Pompey's cause — strong legions of soldiers, chiefly Italian — awaited him in strong positions, chosen at leisure, under Afranius and Petreius. For the rest of this year, 705, Pompey was unmolested. In 706, Cæsar, victorious from Spain, addressed himself to the task of overthrowing Pompey in person ; and, on the 9th of August in that year, took place the ever-memorable battle on the river Pharsalus in Thessaly.

During all this period of about one year and a half, Cicero's letters, at intermitting periods, hold the same language. They fluctuate, indeed, strangely in temper ; for they run through all the changes incident to hoping, trusting, and disappointed friendship. Nothing can equal the expression of his scorn for Pompey's *inertia*, when contrasted with energy so astonishing on the part of his antagonist. Cicero had also been deceived as to facts. The plan of the campaign had, to him in particular, not been communicated ; he had been allowed to calculate on a final resistance in Italy. This was certainly impossible. But the policy of maintaining a show of opposition, which it was intended to abandon at *every* point, or of procuring for Cæsar the credit of so many successive triumphs, which might all have been evaded, has never received any explanation.

Towards the middle of February, Cicero acknowl-

edges the receipt of letters from Rome, which in one sense are valuable, as exposing the system of self-delusion prevailing. Domitius, it seems, who soon after laid down his arms at Corfinium, and with Corfinium, parading his forces only to make a more solemn surrender, had, as the despatches from Rome asserted, an army on which he could rely; as to Cæsar, that nothing was easier than to intercept him; that such was Cæsar's own impression; that honest men were recovering their spirits; and that the rogues at Rome (*Romæ improbos*) were one and all in consternation. It tells powerfully for Cicero's sagacity, that now, amidst this general explosion of childish hopes, he only was sternly incredulous. '*Hæc metuo, equidem, ne sint somnia.*' Yes, he had learned by this time to appreciate the windy reliances of his party. He had an argument from experience for slighting their vain demonstrations; and he had a better argument from the future, as that future was *really* contemplated in the very counsels of the leader. Pompey, though nominally controlled by other men of consular rank, was at present an autocrat for the management of the war. What was his policy? Cicero had now discovered, not so much through confidential interviews, as by the mute tendencies of all the measures adopted — Cicero was satisfied that his total policy had been, from the first, a policy of despair.

The position of Pompey, as an old invalid, from whom his party exacted the services of youth, is worthy of separate notice. There is not, perhaps, a more pitiable situation than that of a veteran reposing upon his past laurels, who is summoned from beds of down, and from the elaborate system of comfort,

engrafted upon a princely establishment, suddenly to re-assume his armor — to prepare for personal hardships of every kind — to renew his youthful anxieties, without support from youthful energies — once again to dispute sword in hand the title to his own honors — to pay back into the chancery of war, as into some fund of abeyance, all his own prizes, and palms of every kind — to re-open every decision or award by which he had ever benefited — and to view his own national distinctions of name, trophy, laurel crown,⁸² as all but so many stakes provisionally resumed, which must be redeemed by services tenfold more difficult than those by which originally they had been earned.

Here was a trial painful, unexpected, sudden ; such as any man, at any age, might have honorably declined. The very best contingency in such a struggle was, that nothing might be lost ; whilst, along with this doubtful hope, ran the certainty — that nothing could be gained. More glorious in the popular estimate of his countrymen, Pompey could not become, for his honors were already historical, and touched with the autumnal hues of antiquity, having been won in a generation now gone by ; but on the other hand he might lose everything, for, in a contest with so dreadful an antagonist as Cæsar, he could not hope to come off unscorched ; and, whatever might be the final event, one result must have struck him as inevitable, viz. that a new generation of men, who had come forward into the arena of life within the last twenty years, would watch the approaching collision with Cæsar as putting to the test a question much canvassed of late, with regard to the soundness and legitimacy of Pompey's military exploits. As a commander-in-chief

Pompey was known to have been unusually fortunate. The bloody contests of Marius, Cinna, Sylla, and their vindictive, but, perhaps, unavoidable, proscription, had thinned the ranks of natural competitors, at the very opening of Pompey's career. That interval of about eight years, by which he was senior to Cæsar, happened to make the whole difference between a crowded list of candidates for offices of trust, and no list at all. Even more lucky had Pompey found himself in the character of his appointments, and in the quality of his antagonists. All his wars had been of that class which yield great splendor of external show, but impose small exertion and less risk. In the war with Mithridates he succeeded to great captains who had sapped the whole stamina and resistance of the contest; besides that, after all the varnishings of Cicero, when speaking for the Manilian law, the enemy was too notoriously effeminate. The bye-battle with the Cilician pirates, is more obscure; but it is certain that the extraordinary powers conferred on Pompey by the Gabinian law, gave to *him*, as compared with his predecessors in the same effort at cleansing the Levant from a nuisance, something like the unfair superiority above their brethren enjoyed by some of Charlemagne's paladins, in the possession of enchanted weapons. The success was already ensured by the great armament placed at Pompey's disposal; and still more by his unlimited commission, which enabled him to force these water-rats out of their holes, and to bring them all into one focus; whilst the pompous name of *Bellum Piraticum*, exaggerated to all after years a success which had been at the moment too partially facilitated. Finally, in his triumph over Sertorius, where only he

would have found a great Roman enemy capable of applying some measure of power to himself, by the energies of resistance, although the transaction is circumstantially involved in much darkness, enough remains to show that Pompey shrank from open contest — passively, how far co-operatively it is hard to say, Pompey owed his triumph to mere acts of decoy and subsequent assassination.

Upon this sketch of Pompey's military life, it is evident that he must have been regarded, after the enthusiasm of the moment had gone by, as a hollow scenical pageant. But what had produced this enthusiasm at the moment? It was the remoteness of the scenes. The pirates had been a troublesome enemy, precisely in that sense which made the Pindarrees of India such to ourselves; because, as flying marauders, lurking and watching their opportunities, they could seldom be brought to action; so that not their power, but their want of power, made them formidable, indisposing themselves to concentration, and consequently weakening the motive to a combined effort against them. Then, as to Mithridates, a great error prevailed in Rome with regard to the quality of his power. The spaciousness of his kingdom, its remoteness, his power of retreat into Armenia — all enabled him to draw out the war into a lingering struggle. These local advantages were misinterpreted. A man who could resist Sylla, Lucullus, and others, approved himself to the raw judgments of the multitude as a dangerous enemy. Whence a very disproportionate appreciation of Pompey — as of a second Scipio who had destroyed a second Hannibal. If Hannibal had transferred the war to the gates of Rome, why not Mithridates, who

had come westwards as far as Greece? And, upon that argument, the panic-struck people of Rome fancied that Mithridates might repeat the experiment. They overlooked the changes which nearly one hundred and fifty years had wrought. As possible it would have been for Scindia and Holkar forty years ago, as possible for Tharawaddie* at this moment, to conduct an expedition into England, as for Mithridates to have invaded Italy at the era of 670–80 of Rome. There is a wild romantic legend, surviving in old Scandinavian literature, that Mithridates did not die by suicide, but that he passed over the Black Sea; from Pontus on the south-east of that sea to the Baltic; crossed the Baltic; and became that Odin whose fierce vindictive spirit reacted upon Rome, in after centuries, through the Goths and Vandals, his supposed descendants: just as the blood of Dido, the Carthaginian queen, after mounting to the heavens — under her dying imprecation,

‘Exoriare aliquis nostro de sanguine vindex’ —

came round in a vast arch of bloodshed upon Rome, under the retaliation of Hannibal, four or five centuries later. This Scandinavian legend might answer for a grand romance, carrying with it, like the Punic legend, a semblance of mighty retribution; but, as an historical possibility, any Mithridatic invasion of Italy would be extravagant. Having been swallowed, however, by Roman credulity as a danger, always *in procinctu*, so long as the old Pontic lion should be unchained, naturally it had happened that this groundless panic, from its very indistinctness and shadowy outline, became more available for Pompey's immoderate glorifi-

* The Burmese Emperor invaded by us then [1842.]

sation than any service so much nearer to home as to be more rationally appreciable. With the same unexampled luck, Pompey, as the last man in the series against Mithridates, stepped into the inheritance of merit belonging to the entire series in that service; and as the laborer who easily reaped the harvest, practically threw into oblivion all those who had so painfully sown it.

But a special Nemesis haunts the steps of men who become great and illustrious by appropriating the trophies of their brothers. Pompey, more strikingly than any man in history, illustrates the moral in his catastrophe. It is perilous to be dishonorably prosperous; and equally so, as the ancients imagined, whether by direct perfidies, (of which Pompey is deeply suspected,) or by silent acquiescence in unjust honors, Seared as Pompey's sensibilities might be through long self-indulgence, and latterly by annual fits of illness, founded on dyspepsy, he must have had, at this great era, a dim misgiving that his good genius was forsaking him. No Shakspeare, with his unusual warnings, had then proclaimed the dark retribution which awaited his final year: but the sentiment of Shakspeare (see his sonnets) is eternal; and must have whispered itself to Pompey's heart, as he saw the billowy war advancing upon him in his old age—

‘The painful warrior, famous for fight,
After a thousand victories—*once faile*’d,
Is from the book of honor razed quite,
And all the rest forgot for which he toil’d.’

To say the truth, in this instance as in so many others, the great moral of the retribution escapes us—because we do not connect the scattered phenomena

into their rigorous unity. Most readers pursue the early steps of this mightiest amongst all civil wars with the hopes and shifting sympathies natural to those who *accompanied* its motions. Cicero must ever be the great authority for the daily fluctuations of public opinion in the one party, as Cæsar, with a few later authors, for those in the other. But inevitably these coeval authorities, shifting their own positions as events advanced, break the uniformity of the lesson. They did not see, as we may if we will, to the end. Sometimes the Pompeian partisans are cheerful; sometimes even they are sanguine; once or twice there is absolutely a slight success to color their vaunts. But much of this is mere political dissimulation. We now find, from the confidential parts of Cicero's correspondence, that he had never heartily hoped from the hour when he first ascertained Pompey's drooping spirits, and his desponding policy. And in a subsequent stage of the contest, when the war had crossed the Adriatic, we now know, by a remarkable passage in his *De Divinatione*, that, whatever he might think it prudent to say, never from the moment when he personally attached himself to Pompey's camp, had he felt any reliance whatever on the composition of the army. Even to Pompey's misgiving ear in solitude, a fatal summons must have been sometimes audible, to resign his quiet life and his showy prosperity. The call was in effect — ‘Leave your palaces; come back to camps — never more to know a quiet hour!’ What if he could have heard *arrière pensée* of the silent call! ‘Live through a brief season of calamity; live long enough for total ruin; live for a morning on which it will be said — *All is lost*; as a panic-stricken fugitive, sue to the mercies

of slaves ; and in return, as a headless trunk, lie like a poor mutilated mariner, rejected by the sea, a wreck from a wreck — owing even the last rites of burial to the pity of a solitary exile.' This doom, and thus circumstantially, no man could know. But, in features that were even gloomier than these, Pompey might, through his long experience of men, have foreseen the bitter course which he had to traverse. It did not require any extraordinary self-knowledge to guess, that continued opposition upon the plan of the campaign would breed fretfulness in himself ; that the irritation of frequent failure, inseparable from a war so widely spread, would cause blame or dishonor to himself ; that his coming experience would be a mere chaos of obstinacy in council, loud remonstrance in action, crimination and recrimination, insolent dictation from rivals, treachery on the part of friends, flight and desertion on the part of confidants. Yet even this fell short of the shocking consummation into which the frenzy of faction ripened itself within a few months. We know of but one case which resembles it, in one remarkable feature. Those readers who are acquainted with Lord Clarendon's *History*, will remember the very striking portrait which he draws of the king's small army of reserve in Devonshire and the adjacent districts, subsequently to the great parliamentary triumph of Naseby in June, 1645. The ground was now cleared ; no work remained for Fairfax but to advance to Northampton, and to sweep away the last relics of opposition. In every case this would have proved no trying task. But what was the condition of the hostile forces ? Lord Clarendon, who had personally presided at their head-quarters whilst in attendance upon the

Prince of Wales, describes them in these emphatic terms as ‘a wicked beaten army.’ Rarely does history present us with such a picture of utter debasement in an army — coming from no enemy, but from one who, at the very moment of recording his opinion, knew this army to be the king’s final resource. Reluctant as a wise man must feel to reject as irredeemable in vileness that which he knows to be indispensable to hope, this solemn opinion of Lord Clarendon’s, upon his royal master’s last stake, had been in earlier ages anticipated by Cicero, under the very same circumstances, with regard to the same ultimate resource. The army which Pompey had concentrated in the regions of northern Greece, *was* the ultimate resource of that party ; because, though a strong *nucleus* for other armies existed in other provinces, these remoter dependencies were in all likelihood contingent upon the result from this — were Pompey prosperous, *they* would be prosperous ; if not, not. Knowing, therefore, the fatal emphasis which belonged to his words, not blind to the inference which they involved, Cicero did, notwithstanding, pronounce confidentially that same judgment of despair upon the army soon to perish at Pharsalia, which, from its strange identity of tenor and circumstances, we have quoted from Lord Clarendon. Both statesmen spoke confessedly of a last sheet anchor ; both spoke of an army vicious in its military composition : but also, which is the peculiarity of the case, both charged the *onus* of their own despair upon the non-professional qualities of the soldiers ; upon their licentious uncivic temper ; upon their open anticipations of plunder ; and upon their tiger-training towards a great festival of coming revenge.

Lord Clarendon, however, it may be said, did not include the commander of the Devonshire army in his denunciation. No : and *there* it is that the two reports differ. Cicero *did* include the commander. It was the commander whom he had chiefly in his eye. Others, indeed, were parties to the horrid conspiracy against the country which he charged upon Pompey for *non datur conjuratio aliter quam per plures*; but these ‘others’ were not the private soldiers — they were the leading officers, the staff, the council at Pompey’s head-quarters, and generally the men of senatorial rank. Yet still, to complete the dismal unity of the prospect, these conspirators had an army of ruffian foreigners under their orders, such as formed an appropriate engine for their horrid purposes.

This is a most important point for clearing up the true character of the war; and it has been utterly neglected by historians. It is notorious that Cicero, on first joining the faction of Pompey after the declaration of hostilities, had for some months justified his conduct on the doctrine — that the ‘causa,’ the constitutional merits of the dispute, lay with Pompey. He could not deny that Cæsar had grievances to plead; but he insisted on two things: 1. That the mode of redress, by which Cæsar made his appeal, was radically illegal; 2. That the certain tendency of this redress was to a civil revolution. Such had been the consistent representation of Cicero, until the course of events made him better acquainted with Pompey’s real temper and policy. It is also notorious — and here lies the key to the error of all biographers — that about two years later, when the miserable death of Pompey had indisposed Cicero to remember his wicked unaccomplished

purposes, and when the assassination of Cæsar had made it safe to resume his ancient mysterious animosity to the very name of the great man, Cicero did undoubtedly go back to his early way of distinguishing between them. As an orator, and as a philosopher, he brought back his original distortions of the case. Pompey, it was again pleaded, had been a champion of the state. (sometimes he ventured upon saying, of liberty,) Cæsar had been a traitor and a tyrant. The two extreme terms of his own politics, the earliest and the last, do in fact meet and blend. But the proper object of scrutiny for the sincere inquirer is this parenthesis of time, that intermediate experience which placed him in daily communion with the real Pompey of the year *Ab Urbe Cond.* 705, and which extorted from his indignant patriotism revelations to his confidential friend so atrocious, that nothing in history approaches them.

This is the period to examine ; for the logic of the case is urgent. Were Cicero now alive, he could make no resistance to a construction, and a personal appeal such as this. Easily you might have a motive, subsequently to your friend's death, for dissembling the evil you had once imputed to him. But it is impossible that, as an unwilling witness, you could have had any motive at all for counterfeiting or exaggerating on your friend an evil purpose that did not exist. The dissimulation might be natural — the stimulation was inconceivable. To suppress a true scandal was the office of a sorrowing friend — to propagate a false one was the office of a knave: not, therefore, that later testimony which to have garbled was amiable but that coeval testimony which to have invented was insanity — this it is which we must abide by. Besides

that, there is another explanation of Cicero's later language than simple piety to the memory of a friend. His discovery of Pompey's execrable plan was limited to a few months ; so that, equally from its brief duration, its suddenness, and its astonishing contradiction to all he had previously believed of Pompey, such a painful secret was likely enough to fade from his recollection, after it had ceased to have any practical importance for the world. On the other hand, Cicero had a deep vindictive policy in keeping back an evil that he knew of Pompey. It was a mere necessity of logic, that, if Pompey had meditated the utter destruction of his country by fire and sword — if, more atrociously still, he had cherished a resolution of unchaining upon Italy the most ferocious barbarians he could gather about his eagles, Getæ for instance, Colchians, Armenians — if he had ransacked the ports of the whole Mediterranean world, and had mustered all the shipping from fourteen separate states enumerated by Cicero, with an express purpose of intercepting all supplies from Rome, and of inflicting the slow torments of famine upon that vast yet non-belligerent city — then, in opposing such a monster, Cæsar was undeniably a public benefactor. Not only would the magnanimity and the gracious spirit of forgiveness in Cæsar, be recalled with advantage into men's thoughts, by any confession of this hideous malignity in his antagonist; but it really became impossible to sustain any theory of ambitious violence in Cæsar, when regarded under his relations to such a body of partrial conspirators. Fighting for public objects that were difficult of explaining to a mob, easily may any chieftain of a party be misrepresented as a child of

selfish ambition. But, once emblazoned as the sole barrier between his native land and a merciless avenger by fire and famine, he would take a tutelary character in the minds of all men. To confess one solitary council — such as Cicero had attended repeatedly at Pompey's head-quarters in Epirus — was, by acclamation from every house in Rome, to evoke a hymn of gratitude towards that great Julian deliverer, whose Pharsalia had turned aside from Italy a deeper woe than any which Paganism records.

We insist inexorably upon this state of relations, as existing between Cicero and the two combatants. We refuse to quit this position. We affirm that, at a time when Cicero argued upon the purposes of Cæsar in a manner confessedly conjectural, on the other hand, with regard to Pompey, from confidential communications, he reported it as a dreadful discovery, that mere destruction to Rome was, upon Pompey's policy, the catastrophe of the war. Cæsar, he might persuade himself, would revolutionize Rome ; but Pompey, he knew in confidence, meant to leave no Rome in existence. Does any reader fail to condemn the selfishness of the constable Bourbon — ranging himself at Pavia in a pitched battle against his sovereign, on an argument of private wrong ? Yet the constable's treason had perhaps identified itself with his self-preservation ; and he had no reason to anticipate a lasting calamity to his country from any act possible to an individual. If we look into ancient history, the case of Hippias, the son of Pisistratus, scarcely approaches to this. He indeed returned to Athens in company with the invading hosts of Darius. But he had probably been expelled from Athens by violent injustice ; and, though

attending a hostile invasion, he could not have caused it. Hardly a second case can be found in all history as a parallel to the dreadful design of Pompey, unless it be that of Count Julian calling in the Saracens to ravage Spain, and to overthrow the altars of Christianity, on the provocation of one outrage to his own house ; early in the eighth century invoking a scourge that was not entirely to be withdrawn until the sixteenth. But then for Count Julian it may be pleaded — that the whole tradition is doubtful ; that if true to the letter, his own provocation was enormous ; and that we must not take the measure of what he meditated by the frightful consequences which actually ensued. Count Julian might have relied on the weakness of the sovereign for giving a present effect to his vengeance, but might still rely consistently enough on the natural strength of his country, when once coerced into union, for ultimately confounding the enemy — and perhaps for confounding the false fanaticism itself. For the worst traitor whom history has recorded, there remains some plea of mitigation ; something in aggravation of the wrongs which he had sustained, something in abatement of the retaliation which he designed. Only for Pompey there is none. Rome had given him no subject of complaint. It was true that the strength of Cæsar lay there ; because immediate hopes from revolution belonged to democracy, to the oppressed, to the multitudes in debt, for whom the law had neglected to provide any prospect or degree of relief ; and these were exactly the class of persons that could not find funds for emigrating. But still there was no overt act, no official act, no representative act, by which Rome had declared herself for either party

Cicero was now aghast at the discoverie; he made with regard to Pompey. Imbecility of purpose — distraction of counsels — feebleness in their dilatory execution — all tended to one dilemma, either that Pompey, as a mere favorite of luck, never had possessed any military talents, or that, by age and conscious inequality to his enemy, these talents were now in a state of collapse. Having first, therefore, made the discovery that his too celebrated friend was anything but a statesman, (*ἀπολιτικώτατος*,) Cicero came at length to pronounce him *ἀστρατηγώτατον* — anything but a general. But all this was nothing in the way of degradation to Pompey's character, by comparison with the final discovery of the horrid retaliation which he meditated upon all Italy, by coming back with barbarous troops to make a wilderness of the opulent land, and upon Rome in particular, by so posting his blockading fleets and his cruisers as to intercept all supplies of corn from Sicily — from the province of Africa — and from Egypt. The great moral, therefore, from Cicero's confidential confessions is — that he abandoned the cause as untenable ; that he abandoned the spposed party of ‘good men,’ as found upon trial to be odious intriguers — and that he abandoned Pompey in any privileged character of a patriotic leader. If he still adhered to Pompey as an individual, it was in memory of his personal obligations to that oligarch, but, secondly, for the very generous reason — that Pompey's fortunes were declining ; and because Cicero would not be thought to have shunned that man in his misfortunes, whom in reality he had felt tempted to despise only for his enormous errors.

After these distinct and reiterated acknowledgments, it is impossible to find the smallest justification for the great harmony of historians in representing Cicero as having abided by those opinions with which he first entered upon the party strife. Even at that time it is probable that Cicero's deep sense of gratitude to Pœmpey secretly, had entered more largely into his decision than he had ever acknowledged to himself. For he had at first exerted himself anxiously to mediate between the two parties. Now, if he really fancied the views of Cæsar to proceed on principles of destruction to the Roman constitution, all mediation was a hopeless attempt. Compromise between extremes lying so widely apart, and in fact, as between the affirmation and the negation of the same propositions, must have been too plainly impossible to have justified any countenance to so impracticable a speculation.

But was not such a compromise impossible in practice, even upon our own theory of the opposite requisitions? No. And a closer statement of the true principles concerned, will show it was not. The great object of the Julian party was, to heal the permanent collision between the supposed functions of the people, in their electoral capacity, in their powers of patronage, and in their vast appellate jurisdiction, with the assumed privileges of the senate. We all know how dreadful have been the disputes in our own country as to the limits of the constitutional forces composing the total state. Between the privileges of the Commons and the prerogative of the Crown, how long a time, and how severe a struggle was required to adjust the true temperament! To say nothing of the fermenting disaffection towards the government throughout the

reign of James I., and the first fifteen years of his son, the great civil war grew out of the sheer contradictions arising between the necessities of the public service and the *letter* of superannuated prerogatives. The simple history of that great strife was, that the democracy, the popular elements in the commonwealth, had outgrown the provisions of old usages and statutes. The king, a most conscientious man, believed that the efforts of the Commons, which represented only the instincts of rapid growth in all popular interests, cloaked a secret plan of encroachment on the essential rights of the sovereign. In this view he was confirmed by lawyers, the most dangerous of all advisers in political struggles; for they naturally seek the solution of all contested claims, either in the position and determination of ancient usage, or in the constructive view of its analogies. Whereas, here the very question was concerning a body of usage and precedent, not denied in many cases as facts, whether that condition of policy, not unreasonable as adapted to a community, having but two dominant interests, were any longer safely tenable under the rise and expansion of a third. For instance, the whole management of our foreign policy had always been reserved to the crown, as one of its most sacred mysteries, or ἀποφέντα: yet, if the people could obtain no indirect control of this policy, through the amplest control of the public purse, even their domestic rights might easily be made nugatory. Again, it was indispensable that the crown purse, free from all direct responsibility, should be checked by some responsibility, operating in a way to preserve the sovereign in his constitutional sanctity. This was finally effected by the admirable compromise — of lodging

the responsibility in the persons of all servants by or through whom the sovereign could act. But this was so little understood by Charles I. as any constitutional privilege of the people, that he resented the proposal as much more insulting to himself than that of fixing the responsibility in his own person. The latter proposal he viewed as a violation of his own prerogative, founded upon open wrong. There was an injury, but no insult. On the other hand, to require of him the sacrifice of a servant, whose only offence had been in his fidelity to himself, was to expect that he should act collusively with those who sought to dishonor him. The absolute *to el Rey* of Spanish kings, in the last resort, seemed in Charles's eye indispensable to the dignity of the crown. And his legal counsellors assured him that, in conceding this point, he would degrade himself into a sort of upper constable, having some disagreeable functions, but none which could surround him with majestic attributes in the eyes of his subjects. Feeling thus, and thus advised, and religiously persuaded that he held his powers for the benefit of his people, so as to be under a deep moral incapacity to surrender 'one dowle' from his royal plumage, he did right to struggle with that energy and that cost of blood which marked his own personal war from 1642 to 1645. Now, on the other hand, we know, that nearly all the concessions sought from the king, and refused as mere treasonable demands, were subsequently re-affirmed, assumed into our constitutional law, and solemnly established forever, about forty years later, by the Revolution of 1688-89. And this great event was in the nature of a compromise. For the patriots of 1642 had been betrayed into some

capital errors, claims both irreconcilable with the dignity of the crown, and useless to the people. This ought not to surprise us, and does not extinguish our debt of gratitude to those great men. Where has been the man, much less the party of men, that did not, in a first essay upon so difficult an adjustment as that of an equilibration between the limits of political forces, travel into some excesses? But forty years' experience — the restoration of a party familiar with the invaluable uses of royalty, and the harmonious co-operation of a new sovereign, already trained to a system of restraints, made this final settlement as near to a perfect adjustment and compromise between all conflicting rights, as, perhaps, human wisdom could attain.

Now, from this English analogy, we may explain something of what is most essential in the Roman conflict. This great feature was common to the two cases — that the change sought by the revolutionary party was not an arbitrary change, but in the way of a natural *nitus*, working secretly throughout two or three generations. It was a tendency that would be denied. Just as, in the England of 1640, it is impossible to imagine that, under any immediate result whatever, ultimately the mere necessities of expansion in a people, ebullient with juvenile energies, and passing, at every decennium, into new stages of development, could have been gainsayed or much retarded. Had the nation embodied less of that stern political temperament, which leads eventually to extremities in action, it is possible that the upright and thoughtful character of the sovereign might have reconciled the Commons to expedients of present redress, and for twenty years the

crisis might have been evaded. But the licentious character of Charles II. would inevitably have challenged the resumption of the struggle in a more embittered shape ; for in the actual war of 1642, the *separate* resources of the crown were soon exhausted ; and a deep sentiment of respect towards the king kept alive the principle of fidelity to the crown, through all the oscillations of the public mind. Under a stronger reaction against the personal sovereign, it is not absolutely impossible that the aristocracy might have come into the project of a republic. Whenever this body stood aloof, and by alliance with the church, as well as with a very large section of the democracy, their non-adhesion to republican plans finally brought them to extinction. But the principle cannot be refused — that the conflict was inevitable ; that the collision could in no way have been evaded ; and for the same reason as spoken so loudly in Rome — because the grievances to be redressed, and the incapacities to be removed, and the organs to be renewed, were absolute and urgent ; that the evil grew out of the political system ; that this system had generally been the silent product of time ; and that as the sovereign, in the English case most conscientiously, so, on the other hand, in Rome, the Pompeian faction, with no conscience at all, stood upon the letter of usage and precedent, where the secret truth was — that nature herself, that nature which works in political by change, by growth, by destruction, not less certainly than in physical organizations, had long been silently superannuating these precedents, and preparing the transition into forms more in harmony with public safety.

The capital fault in the operative constitution of

Rome, had long been in the *antinomies*, if we may be pardoned for so learned a term, of the public service. It is not so true an expression — that anarchy was always to be apprehended, as, in fact — that anarchy always subsisted. What made this anarchy more and less dangerous, was the personal character of the particular man militant for the moment; next, the variable interest which such a party might have staked upon the contest; and lastly, the variable means at his disposal towards public agitation. Fortunately for the public safety, these forces, like all forces in this world of compensations, and of fluctuations, obeying steady laws, rose but seldom into the excess which menaced the framework of the state. Even in disorder, when long-continued, there is an order that can be calculated: dangers were foreseen; remedies were put into an early state of preparation. But because the evil had not been so ruinous as might have been predicted, it was not the less an evil, and it was not the less enormously increasing. The democracy retained a large class of functions, for which the original uses had been long extinct. Powers, which had utterly ceased to be available for interests of their own, were now used purely as the tenures by which they held a vested interest in bribery. The sums requisite for bribery were rising as the great estates rose. No man, even in a gentlemanly rank, no *eques*, no ancient noble even, unless his income were hyperbolically vast, or unless as the creature of some party in the background, could at length face the ruin of a political career. We do not speak of men anticipating a special resistance, but of those who stood in ordinary circumstances. Atticus is not a man whom we should cite for any authority in

a question of principle, for we believe him to have been a dissembling knave, and the most perfect vicar of Bray extant; but in a question of prudence, his example is decisive. Latterly he was worth a hundred thousand pounds. Four-fifths of this sum, it is true, had been derived from a casual bequest; however, he had been rich enough, even in early life, to present all the poor citizens of Athens — probably twelve thousand families — with a year's consumption for two individuals of excellent wheat; and he had been distinguished for other ostentatious largesses; yet this man held it to be ridiculous, in common prudence, that he should embark upon any political career. Merely the costs of an ædileship, to which he would have arrived in early life, would have swallowed up the entire hundred thousand pounds of his mature good luck. ‘Honores non petiit; quod neque peti more majorum, neque capi possent, conservatis legibus, in tam effusis largitionibus; neque geri sine periculo, corruptis civitatis moribus.’ But this argument on the part of Atticus pointed to a modest and pacific career. When the politics of a man, or his special purpose, happened to be polemic, the costs, and the personal risk, and the risk to the public peace, were on a scale prodigiously greater. No man with such views could think of coming forward without a princely fortune, and the courage of a martyr. Milo, Curio, Decimus, Brutus, and many persons besides, in a lapse of twenty-five years, spent fortunes of four and five hundred thousand pounds, and without accomplishing, after all much of what they proposed. In other shapes, the evil was still more malignant; and, as these circumstantial cases are the most impressive, we will bring forward a few.

I.—Provisional administrations. The Romans were not characteristically a rapacious or dishonest people — the Greeks were ; and it is a fact strongly illustrative of that infirmity in principle, and levity, which made the Greeks so contemptible to the graver judgments of Rome — that hardly a trustworthy man could be found for the receipt of taxes. The regular course of business was, that the Greeks absconded with the money, unless narrowly watched. Whatever else they might be — sculptors, buffoons, dancers, tumblers — they were a nation of swindlers. For the art of fidelity in peculation, you might depend upon them to any amount. Now, amongst the Romans, these petty knaveries were generally unknown. Even as knaves they had aspiring minds ; and the original key to their spoliations in the provinces, was undoubtedly the vast scale of their domestic corruption. A man who had to begin by bribing one nation, must end by fleecing another. Almost the only open channels through which a Roman nobleman could create a fortune, (always allowing for a large means of marrying to advantage, since a man might shoot a whole series of divorcees, still refunding the last dowry, but still replacing it with a better,) were these two — lending money on sea-risks, or to embarrassed municipal corporations on good landed or personal security, with the gain of twenty, thirty, or even forty per cent. ; and secondly, the grand resource of a provincial government. The abuses we need not state : the prolongation of these lieutenancies beyond the legitimate year, was one source of enormous evil ; and it was the more rooted an abuse, because very often it was undeniable that other evils arose in the

opposite scale from too hasty a succession of governors, upon which principle no consistency of local improvements could be ensured, nor any harmony even in the administration of justice, since each successive governor brought his own system of legal rules.

As to the other and more flagrant abuses in extortion from the province, in garbling the accounts and defeating all scrutiny at Rome, in embezzlement of military pay, and in selling every kind of private advantage for bribes, these have been made notorious by the very circumstantial exposure of Verres. But some of the worst evils are still unpublished, and must be looked for in the indirect revelations of Cicero when himself a governor, as well as the incidental relations by special facts and cases. We, on our parts, will venture to raise a doubt whether Verres ought really to be considered that exorbitant criminal whose guilt has been so profoundly impressed upon us all by the forensic artifices of Cicero. The true reasons for his condemnation must be sought, first, in the proximity of Rome of that Sicilian province where many of his alleged oppressions had occurred — the fluent intercourse with his island, and the multiplied inter-connections of individual towns with Roman grandees, aggravated the facilities of making charges ; whilst the proofs were anything but satisfactory in the Roman judicature. Here lay one disadvantage of Verres ; but another was — that the ordinary system of bribes, viz. the sacrifice of one portion from the spoils in the shape of bribes to the jury (*judices*) in order to redeem the other portions, could not be applied in this case. The spoils were chiefly works

of art; Verres was the very first man who formed a gallery of art in Rome; and a French writer in the *Académie des Inscriptions* has written a most elaborate *catalogue raisonné* to his gallery — drawn from the materials left by Cicero and Pliny. But this was obviously a sort of treasure that did not admit of partition. And the object of Verres would equally have been defeated by selling a part for the costs of 'salvage' on the rest. In this sad dilemma, Verres upon the whole resolved to take his chance; or, if bribery were applied to some extent, it must have stopped far short of that excess to which it would have proceeded under a more disposable form of his gains. But we will not conceal the truth which Cicero indirectly reveals. The capital abuse in the provincial system was — not that the guilty governor might escape, but that the innocent governor might be ruined. It is evident that, in a majority of cases, this magistrate was thrown upon his own discretion. Nothing could be so indefinite and uncircumstantial as the Roman laws on this head. The most upright administrator was almost as cruelly laid open to the fury of calumnious persecution as the worst; both were often cited to answer upon parts of their administration altogether blameless; but, when the original rule had been so wide and lax, the final resource must be in the mercy of the tribunals.

II. — *The Roman judicial system.* This would require a separate volume, and chiefly upon this ground — that in no country upon earth, except Rome, has the ordinary administration of justice been applied as a great political engine. Men, who could not other

wise be removed, were constantly assailed by impeachments; and oftentimes for acts done forty or fifty years before the time of trial. But this dreadful aggravation of the injustice was not generally needed. The system of trial was the most corrupt that has ever prevailed under European civilization. The composition of their courts, as to the *rank* of the numerous jury, was continually changed: but no change availed to raise them above bribery. The rules of evidence were simply none at all. Every hearsay, erroneous rumor, atrocious libel, was allowed to be offered as evidence. Much of this never could be repelled, as it had not been anticipated. And, even in those cases where no bribery was attempted, the issue was dependent, almost in a desperate extent, upon the impression made by the advocate. And finally it must be borne in mind that there was no presiding *judge*, in our sense of the word, to sum up — to mitigate the effect of arts of falsehood in the advocate — to point the true bearing of the evidence — still less to state and to restrict the law. Law there very seldom was any, in a precise circumstantial shape. The verdict might be looked for accordingly. And we do not scruple to say — that so triumphant a machinery of oppression has never existed, no, not in the dungeons of the inquisition.

III. — *The license of public libelling.* Upon this we had proposed to enlarge. But we must forbear. One only caution we must impress upon the reader; he may fancy that Cicero would not practise or defend in others the absolute abuse of confidence on the part of the jury and audience by employing direct false-

hoods. But this is a mistake. Cicero, in his justification of the artifices used at the bar, evidently goes the whole length of advising the employment of all misstatements whatsoever which wear a plausible air. His own practice leads to the same inference. Not the falsehood, but the defect of probability, is what in his eyes degrades any possible assertion or insinuation. And he holds also — that a barrister is not accountable for the frequent self-contradictions in which he must be thus involved at different periods of time. The immediate purpose is paramount to all extra-judicial consequences whatever, and to all subsequent exposures of the very grossest inconsistency in the most calumnious falsehoods.

IV. — *The morality of expediency employed by Roman statesmen.* The regular relief, furnished to Rome under the system of anarchy which Cæsar proposed to set aside, lay in seasonable murders. When a man grew potent in political annoyance, somebody was employed to murder him. Never was there a viler or better established murder than that of Clodius by Milo, or that of Carbo and others by Pompey when a young man, acting as the tool of Sylla. Yet these and the murders of the two Gracchi, nearly a century before Cicero justifies as necessary. So little progress had law and sound political wisdom then made, that Cicero was not aware of anything monstrous in pleading for a most villainous act — that circumstances had made it expedient. Such a man is massacred, and Cicero appeals to all your natural feelings of honor against the murderers. Such another is massacred on the opposite side, and Cicero thinks it quite sufficient to repl-

— ‘Oh, but I assure you he was a bad man — I knew him to be a bad man. And it was his duty to be murdered — as the sole service he could render the commonwealth.’ So again, in common with all his professional brethren, Cicero never scruples to ascribe the foulest lust and abominable propensities to any public antagonist; never asking himself any question but this — Will it look probable? He personally escaped such slanders, because as a young man he was known to be rather poor, and very studious. But in later life a horrible calumny of that class settled upon himself, and one peculiarly shocking to his parental grief; for he was then sorrowing in extremity for the departed lady who had been associated in the slander. Do we lend a moment’s credit to the foul insinuation? No. But we see the equity of this retribution revolving upon one who had so often slandered others in the same malicious way. At last the poisoned chalice came round to his own lips, and at a moment when it wounded the most acutely.

V.—*The continued repetition of convulsions in the state.* Under the last head we have noticed a consequence of the long Roman anarchy dreadful enough to contemplate, viz. the necessity of murder as a sole relief to the extremities continually recurring, and as a permanent temptation to the vitiation of all moral ideas in the necessity of defending it imposed often upon such men as Cicero. This was an evil which cannot be exaggerated: but a more extensive evil lay in the recurrence of those conspiracies which the public anarchy promoted. We have all been deluded upon this point. The conspiracy of Catiline, to those who

weigh well the mystery still enveloping the names of Cæsar, of the Consul C. Antonius, and others suspected as partial accomplices in this plot, and who consider also what parties were the exposers or merciless avengers of this plot, was but a reiteration of the attempts made within the previous fifty years by Marius, Cinna, Sylla, and finally by Cæsar and by his heir Octavius, to raise a reformed government, safe and stable, upon this hideous oligarchy that annually almost brought the people of Rome into the necessity of a war and the danger of a merciless proscription. That the usual system of fraudulent falsehoods was offered by way of evidence against Catiline, is pretty obvious. Indeed, why should it have been spared? The evidence, in a lawyer's sense, is after all none at all. The pretended revelations of foreign envoys go for nothing. These could have been suborned most easily. And the shocking defect of the case is — that the accused party were never put on their defence, never confronted with the base tools of the accusers, and the senators amongst them were overwhelmed with clamors if they attempted their defence in the senate. The motive to this dreadful injustice is manifest. There *was* a conspiracy; that we do not doubt; and of the same nature as Cæsar's. Else why should eminent men, too dangerous for Cicero to touch, have been implicated in the obscurer charges? How had they any interest in the ruin of Rome? How had Catiline any interest in such a tragedy? But all the grandees, who were too much embarrassed in debt to bear the means of profiting by the machinery of bribes applied to so vast a populace, naturally wished to place the administration of public affairs on another footing

many from merely selfish purposes, like Cethegus or Lentulus — some, we doubt not, from purer motives of enlarged patriotism. One charge against Catiline we may quote from many, as having tainted the most plausible part of the pretended evidence with damnable suspicions. The reader may not have remarked — but the fact is such — that one of the standing artifices for injuring a man with the populace of Rome, when all other arts had failed, was to say, that amongst his plots was one for burning the city. This cured that indifference with which otherwise the mob listened to stories of conspiracy against a system which they held in no reverence or affection. Now, this most senseless charge was renewed against Catiline. It is hardly worthy of notice. Of what value to him could be a heap of ruins? Or how could he hope to found an influence amongst those who were yet reeking from such a calamity?

But, in reality, this conspiracy was that effort continually moving underground, and which would have continually exploded in shocks dreadful to the quiet of the nation, which mere necessity, and the instincts of position, prompted to the parties interested. Let the reader only remember the long and really ludicrous succession of men sent out against Antony at Mutina by the senate, viz. Octavius, Plancus, Asinius Pollio, Lepidus, every one of whom fell away almost instantly to the anti-senatorial cause, to say nothing of the consuls, Hirtius and Pansa, who would undoubtedly have followed the general precedent, had they not been killed prematurely: and it will become apparent how irresistible this popular cause was, as the sole introduction to a patriotic reformation, ranged too notoriously

against a narrow scheme of selfishness, which interested hardly forty families. It does not follow that all men, simply as enemies of an oligarchy, would have afterwards exhibited a pure patriotism. Cæsar, however, did. His reforms, even before his Pompeian struggle, were the greatest ever made by an individual ; and those which he carried through after that struggle, and during that brief term which his murderers allowed him, transcended by much all that in any one century had been accomplished by the collective patriotism of Rome.

PHILOSOPHY OF ROMAN HISTORY.

It would be thought strange indeed, if there should exist a large, a memorable section of history, traversed by many a scholar with various objects, reviewed by many a reader in a spirit of anxious scrutiny, and yet to this hour misunderstood ; erroneously appreciated ; its tendencies mistaken, and its whole meaning, import, value, not so much inadequately—as falsely, ignorantly, perversely—deciphered. *Prima facie*, one would pronounce this impossible. Nevertheless it is a truth ; and it is a solemn truth ; and what gives to it this solemnity, is the mysterious meaning, the obscure hint of a still profounder meaning in the background, which begins to dawn upon the eye when first piercing the darkness now resting on the subject. Perhaps no one arc or segment, detached from the total cycle of human records, promises so much beforehand — so much instruction, so much gratification to curiosity, so much splendor, so much depth of interest, as the great period — the systole and diastole flux and reflux — of the Western Roman Empire. Its parentage was magnificent and Titanic. It was a birth out of the death-struggles of the colossal republic : its foundations were laid by that sublime

dictator, ‘the foremost man of all this world,’ who was unquestionably for comprehensive talents the Lucifer, the Protagonist of all antiquity. Its range, the compass of its extent, was appalling to the imagination. Coming last amongst what are called the great monarchies of Prophecy, it was the only one which realized in perfection the idea of a *monarchia*, being (except for Parthia and the great fable of India beyond it) strictly coincident with *η οικουμένη*, or the civilized world. Civilization and this empire were commensurate: they were interchangeable ideas, and co-extensive. Finally, the path of this great Empire, through its arch of progress, synchronized with that of Christianity: the ascending orbit of each was pretty nearly the same, and traversed the same series of generations. These elements, in combination, seemed to promise a succession of golden harvests: from the specular station of the Augustan age, the eye caught glimpses by anticipation of some glorious El Dorado for human hopes. What was the practical result for our historic experience? Answer — A sterile Zaarra. Prelibations, as of some heavenly vintage, were inhaled by the Virgils of the day looking forward in the spirit of prophetic rapture; whilst in the very sadness of truth, from that age forwards the Roman world drank from stagnant marshes. A Paradise of roses was prefigured: a wilderness of thorns was found.

Even this fact has been missed — even the bare fact has been overlooked; much more the causes, the principles, the philosophy of this fact. The rapid barbarism which closed in behind Cæsar’s chariot-wheels, has been hid by the pomp and equipage of the imperial court. The vast power and domination

of the Roman empire, for the three centuries which followed the battle of Actium, have dazzled the historic eye, and have had the usual reaction on the power of vision; a dazzled eye is always left in a condition of darkness. The battle of Actium was followed by the final conquest of Egypt. That conquest rounded and integrated the glorious empire; it was now circular as a shield — orbicular as the disk of a planet: the great Julian arch was now locked into the cohesion of granite by its last key-stone. From that day forward, for three hundred years, there was silence in the world: no muttering was heard: no eye winked beneath the wing. Winds of hostility might still rave at intervals: but it was on the outside of the mighty empire: it was at a dream-like distance; and, like the storms that beat against some monumental castle, ‘and at the doors and windows seem to call,’ they rather irritated and vivified the sense of security, than at all disturbed its luxurious lull.

That seemed to all men the consummation of political wisdom — the ultimate object of all strife — the very euthanasia of war. Except on some fabulous frontier, armies seemed gay pageants of the Roman rank rather than necessary bulwarks of the Roman power: spear and shield were idle trophies of the past: ‘the trumpet spoke not to the alarmed throng.’ Hush, ye palpitations of Rome! was the cry of the superb Aurelian,⁸² from his far-off pavilion in the deserts of the Euphrates — Hush, fluttering heart of the eternal city! Fall back into slumber, ye wars, and rumors of wars! Turn upon your couches of down, ye children of Romulus — sink back into your

voluptuous repose : We, your almighty armies, have chased into darkness those phantoms that had broken your dreams. We have chased, we have besieged, we have crucified, we have slain. ‘*Nihil est, Romule et Quirites, quod timere possitis. Ego efficiam ne sit aliqua solicitude Romana. Vacate ludis — vacate circensibus. Nos publicæ necessitates teneant : vos occipent voluptates.*’ Did ever Siren warble so dulcet a song to ears already prepossessed and medicated with spells of Circean effeminacy ?

But in this world all things re-act : and the very extremity of any force is the seed and nucleus of a counter-agency. You might have thought it as easy (in the words of Shakspeare) to

‘Wound the loud winds, or with be-mock’d-at stabs
Kill the still-closing waters,’

as to violate the majesty of the imperial eagle, or to ruffle ‘one dowle that’s in his plume.’ But luxurious ease is the surest harbinger of pain ; and the dead lulls of tropical seas are the immediate forerunners of tornadoes. The more absolute was the security obtained by Cæsar for his people, the more inevitable was his own ruin. Scarcely had Aurelian sung his requiem to the agitations of Rome, before a requiem was sung by his assassins to his own warlike spirit. Scarcely had Probus, another Aurelian, proclaimed the eternity of peace, and, by way of attesting his own martial supremacy, had commanded ‘that the brazen throat of war should cease to roar,’ when the trumpets of the four winds proclaimed his own death by murder. Not as anything extraordinary ; for, in fact, violent death — death by assassination — was the regular portal (the

porta Libitina, or funeral gate) through which the Cæsars passed out of this world; and to die in their beds was the very rare exception to that stern rule of fate. Not, therefore, as in itself at all noticeable, but because this particular murder of Probus stands scenically contrasted with the great vision of *Peace*, which he fancied as lying in clear revelation before him, permit us, before we proceed with our argument, to rehearse his golden promises. The sabres were already unsheathed, the shirt-sleeves were already pushed up from those murderous hands, which were to lacerate his throat, and to pierce his heart, when he ascended the Pisgah from which he descried the Saturanian ages to succeed:—‘*Brevi*,’ said he, ‘*milites non necessarios habebimus. Romanus jam miles erit nullus. Omnia possidebimus. Respublica orbis terrarum, ubique secura, non arma fabricabit. Boves habebuntur aratro: equus nascetur ad pacem. Nulla erunt bella: nulla captivitas. Ubique pax: ubique Romana leges: ubique judices nostri.*’ The historian himself, tame and creeping as he is in his ordinary style, warms in sympathy with the Emperor: his diction blazes up into a sudden explosion of prophetic grandeur: and he adopts all the views of Cæsar. ‘*Nonne omnes barbaras nationes subjecerat pedibus?*’ he demands with lyrical tumult: and then, while confessing the immediate disappointment of his hopes, thus repeats the great elements of the public felicity whenever they should be realized by a Cæsar equally martial for others, but more fortunate for himself:—
‘*Eternos thesauros haberet Romana respublica. Nihil spenderetur à principe; nihil à possessore redderetur. Aureum profecto seculum promittebat. Nulla futura*

*erant castra: nusquam lituus audiendus: arma non erant fabricanda. Populus iste militantium, qui nunc bellis civilibus Rempublicam vexat' — aye ! how was that to be absorbed ? How would that vast crowd of half-pay *emeriti* employ itself ? 'Araret : studiis incumberet : erudiretur artibus : navigaret.' And he closes his prophetic raptures thus : 'Adde quod nullus occideretur in bello. Dii boni ! quid tandem vos offenderet Respublicā Romanā, cui talem principem sustulisti ?'*

Even in his lamentations, it is clear that he mourns as for a blessing delayed — not finally denied. The land of promise still lay, as before, in steady vision below his feet ; only that it waited for some happier Augustus, who, in the great lottery of Cæsarian destinies, might happen to draw the rare prize of a prosperous reign not prematurely blighted by the assassin ; with whose purple *alourgis* might mingle no *fasciæ* of crape — with whose imperial laurels might entwine no ominous cypress. The hope of a millennial armistice, of an eternal rest for the earth, was not dead : once again only, and for a time, it was sleeping in abeyance and expectation. That blessing, that millennial blessing, it seems, might be the gift of Imperial Rome.

II.— Well : and why not ? the reader demands. What have we to say against it ? This Cæsar, or that historian, may have carried his views a little too far, or too prematurely ; yet, after all, the very enormity of what they promised must be held to argue the enormity of what had been accomplished. To give any plausibility to a scheme of perpetual peace, war must already have become rare, and must have been ban-

ished to a prodigious distance. It was no longer the hearths and the altars, home and religious worship, which quaked under the tumults of war. It was the purse which suffered — the exchequer of the state; secondly, the exchequer of each individual; thirdly, and in the end, the interests of agriculture, of commerce, of navigation. This is what the historian indicates, in promising his brother Romans that '*omnia possidebimus* :' by which, perhaps, he did not mean to lay the stress on '*omnia*,' as if, in addition to their own property, they were to have that of alien or frontier nations, but (laying the stress on the word *possidebimus*) meant to say, with regard to property already their own — 'We shall no longer hold it as joint proprietors with the state, and as liable to fluctuating taxation, but shall henceforwards possess it in absolute exclusive property.' This is what he indicates in saying — *Boves habebuntur aratro*: that is, the oxen, one and all available for the plough, shall no longer be open to the everlasting claims of the public *frumentarii* for conveying supplies to the frontier armies. This is what he indicates in saying of the individual liable to military service — that he should no longer live to slay or to be slain, for barren bloodshed or violence, but that henceforth '*araret*,' or '*navigaret*.' All these passages, by pointing the expectations emphatically to benefits of purse exonerated, and industry emancipated, sufficiently argue the class of interests which then suffered by war: that it was the interests of private property, of agricultural improvement, of commercial industry, upon which exclusively fell the evils of a belligerent state under the Roman empire: and here already lies a mighty blessing achieved for social

existence — when sleep is made sacred, and thresholds secure ; when the temple of human life is safe, and the temple of female honor is hallowed. These great interests, it is admitted, were sheltered under the mighty dome of the Roman empire : that is already an advance made towards the highest civilization : and this is not shaken because a particular emperor should be extravagant, or a particular historian romantic.

No, certainly : but stop a moment at this point. Civilization, to the extent of security for life, and the primal rights of man, necessarily grows out of every strong government. And it follows also — that, as this government widens its sphere — as it pushes back its frontiers, *ultra et Garamantas et Indos*, in that proportion will the danger diminish (for in fact the possibility diminishes) of foreign incursions. The sense of permanent security from conquest, or from the inroad of marauders, must of course have been prodigiously increased when the nearest standing army of Rome was beyond the Tigris and the Inn — as compared with those times when Carthage, Spain, Gaul, Macedon, presented a ring-fence of venomous rivals, and when every little nook in the eastern Mediterranean swarmed with pirates. Thus far, inevitably, the Roman police, planting one foot of his golden compasses in the same eternal centre, and with the other describing an arch continually wider, must have banished all idea of public enemies, and have deepened the sense of security beyond calculation. Thus far we have the benefits of police ; and those are amongst the earliest blessings of civilization ; and they are one indispensable condition — what in logic is called the *conditio sine qua non* for all the other blessings. But that, in othe-

words, is a *negative* cause, (a cause which, being absent, the effect is absent;) but not the *positive* cause, (or *causa sufficiens*,) which, being present, the effect will be present. The security of the Roman empire was the indispensable condition, but not in itself a sufficient cause of those other elements which compose a true civilization. Rome was the centre of a high police, which radiated to Parthia eastwards, to Britain westwards, but not of a high civilization.

On the contrary, what we maintain is — that the Roman civilization was imperfect *ab intra* — imperfect in its central principle; was a piece of watchwork that began to go down — to lose its spring ; and was slowly retrograding to a dead stop, from the very moment that it had completed its task of foreign conquest : that it was kept going from the very first by strong reaction and antagonism : that it fell into torpor from the moment when this antagonism ceased to operate ; that thenceforwards it oscillated backwards violently to barbarism : that, left to its own principles of civilization,

the Roman empire was barbarizing rapidly from the time of Trajan : that abstracting from all alien agencies whatever, whether accelerating or retarding, and supposing Western Rome to have been thrown exclusively upon the resources and elasticity of her own proper civilization, she was crazy and superannuated by the time of Commodus — must soon have gone to pieces — must have foundered ; and, under any possible benefit from favorable accidents co-operating with alien forces, could not, by any great term, have retarded that doom which was written on her drooping energies, prescribed by internal decay, and not at all (as is universally imagined) by external assault.

III.—‘Barbarizing rapidly!’ the reader murmured — ‘Barbarism! Oh, yes, I remember the Barbarians broke in upon the Western Empire — the Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Vandals, Burgundians, Huns, Heruli, and swarms beside. These wretches had no taste — no literature, probably very few ideas; and naturally they barbarized and rebarbarized wherever they moved. But surely the writer errs: this influx of barbarism was not in Trajan’s time at the very opening of the second century from Christ, but throughout the fifth century.’ No, reader; it is not we who err, but you. These were not the barbarians of Rome. That is the miserable fiction of Italian vanity, always stigmatizing better men than themselves by the name of barbarians; and in fact we all know, that to be an ultramontane is with them to be a barbarian. The horrible charge against the Greeks of old, viz., that *sua tantum mirantur*, a charge implying in its objects the last descent of narrow sensibility and of illiterate bigotry, in modern times has been true only of two nations, and those two are the French and the Italians. But, waiving the topic, we affirm — and it is the purpose of our essay to affirm — that the barbarism of Rome grew out of Rome herself; that these pretended barbarians — Gothic, Vandalish,³⁴ Lombard — or by whatever name known to modern history — were in reality the restorers and regenerators of the effete Roman intellect; that, but for them, the indigenous Italian would probably have died out in scrofula, madness, leprosy; that the sixth or seventh century would have seen the utter extinction of these Italian *strulbrugs*; for which opinion, if it were important, we could show cause. But it is much less important to show cause in behalf of this negative proposition —

that the Goths and Vandals were *not* the barbarians of the western empire' — than in behalf of this affirmative proposition, 'that the Romans *were*.' We do not wish to overlay the subject, but simply to indicate a few of the many evidences which it is in our power to adduce. We mean to rely, for the present, upon four arguments, as exponents of the barbarous and barbarizing tone of feeling, which, like so much moss or lichens, had gradually overgrown the Roman mind, and by the third century had strangled all healthy vegetation of natural and manly thought. During this third century it was, in its latter half, that most of the Augustan history was probably composed. Laying aside the two Victors, Dion Cassius, Ammianus Marcellinus, and a few more indirect notices of history during this period, there is little other authority for the annals of the Western Empire than this Augustan history; and at all events, this is the chief well-head of that history; hither we must resort for most of the personal biography, and the portraiture of characters connected with that period; and here only we find the regular series of princes — the whole gallery of Cæsars, from Trajan to the immediate predecessor of Dioclesian. The composition of this work has been usually distributed amongst six authors, viz., Spartian, Capitolinus, Lampridius, Volcatius Gallicanus, Trebellius Pollio, and Vopiscus. Their several shares, it is true, have been much disputed to and fro; and other questions have been raised, affecting the very existence of some amongst them. But all this is irrelevant to our present purpose, which applies to the work, but not at all to the writers, excepting in so far as they (by whatever names known) were notoriously and demonstrably per-

sons belonging to that era, trained in Roman habits of thinking, connected with the court, intimate with the great Palatine officers, and therefore presumably men of rank and education. We rely, in so far as we rely at all upon this work, upon these two among its characteristic features: 1st, Upon the quality and style of its biographic notices; 2dly, Upon the remarkable uncertainty which hangs over all lives a little removed from the personal cognizance or immediate era of the writer. But as respects, not the history, but the subjects of the history, we rely, 3dly, Upon the peculiar traits of feeling which gradually began to disfigure the ideal conception of the Roman Cæsar in the minds of his subjects; 4thly, Without reference to the Augustan history, or to the subjects of that history, we rely generally, for establishing the growing barbarism of Rome, upon the condition of the Roman literature after the period of the first twelve Cæsars.

IV.—First of all, we infer the increasing barbarism of the Roman mind from the quality of the personal notices and portraitures exhibited throughout these biographical records. The whole may be described by one word—*anecdote*. It is impossible to conceive the dignity of history more degraded than by the petty nature of the anecdotes which compose the bulk of the communications about every Cæsar, good or bad, great or little. They are not merely domestic and purely personal, when they ought to have been Cæsarian, Augustan, imperatorial—they pursue Cæsar not only into his fireside, but into his bed-chamber, into his bath, into his cabinet, nay, even (*sit honor auribus!*) into his cabinet d'aisance; not merely into the Palatin

closet, but into the Palatine water-closet. Thus of Heliogabalus we are told — ‘*onus ventris auro excepit — minxit myrrhinis et onychinis*;’ that is, Cæsar’s *lasanum* was made of gold, and his *matula* was made of onyx, or of the undetermined *myrrhine* material. And so on, with respect to the dresses of Cæsar; — how many of every kind he wore in a week — of what material they were made — with what ornaments. So again, with respect to the meals of Cæsar; — what dishes, what condiments, what fruits, what confection prevailed at each course; what wines he preferred; how many glasses (*cyathos*) he usually drank, whether he drank more when he was angry; whether he diluted his wine with water; half-and-half, or how? Did he get drunk often? How many times a week? What did he generally do when he was drunk? How many chemises did he allow to his wife? How were they fringed? At what cost per chemise?

In this strain — how truly worthy of the children of Romulus — how becoming to the descendants from Scipio Africanus, from Paulus Æmilius, from the colossal Marius and the godlike Julius — the whole of the Augustan history moves. There is a superb line in Lucan which represents the mighty phantom of Paulus standing at a banquet to reproach or to alarm —

‘*Et Pauli ingentem stare miraberis umbram!*’

What a horror would have seized this Augustan scribbler, this Roman Tims, if he could have seen this ‘mighty phantom’ at his elbow looking over his inanities; and what a horror would have seized the phantom! Once, in the course of his aulic memorabilia, the writer is struck with a sudden glimpse of such an

idea ; and he reproaches himself for recording such infinite littleness. After reporting some anecdotes, in the usual Augustan style, about an Imperial rebel, as for instance that he had ridden upon ostriches, (which he says was the next thing to flying;) that he had eaten a dish of boiled hippopotamus;⁸⁵ and that, having a fancy for tickling the catastrophes of crocodiles, he had anointed himself with crocodile fat, by which means he humbugged the crocodiles, ceasing to be Cæsar, and passing for a crocodile — swimming and playing amongst them ; these glorious facts being recorded, he goes on to say — ‘*Sed hæc scire quid prodest ? Cum et Livius et Sallustius taceant res leves de iis quorum vitas scribendas arripuerint. Non enim scimus quales mulos Clodius habuerit ; nec utrum Tusco equo sederit Catilina an Sardo ; vel quali chlamyde Pompeius usus fuerit, an purpurā.*’ No : we do not know. Livy would have died ‘in the high Roman fashion’ before he would have degraded himself, by such babble of nursery-maids, or of palace pimps and eaves-droppers.

But it is too evident that babble of this kind grew up not by any accident, but as a natural growth, and by a sort of physical necessity, from the condition of the Roman mind after it had ceased to be excited by opposition in foreign nations. It was not merely the extinction of republican institutions which operated, (that might operate as a co-cause,) but, had these institutions even survived, the unresisted energies of the Roman mind, having no purchase, nothing to push against, would have collapsed. The eagle, of all birds, would be the first to flutter and sink plumb down, if the atmosphere should make no resistance to

his wings. The first Roman of note who began this system of anecdote was Suetonius. In him the poison of the degradation was much diluted, by the strong remembrances, still surviving, of the mighty republic. The glorious sunset was still burning with gold and orange lights in the west. True, the disease had commenced; but the habits of health were still strong for restraint and for conflict with its power. Besides that, Suetonius graces his minutiae, and embalms them in amber, by the exquisite finish of his rhetoric. But his case, coming so early among the Cæsarian annals, is sufficient to show that the growth of such history was a spontaneous growth from the circumstances of the empire, viz. from the total collapse of all public antagonism.

The next literature in which the spirit of anecdote arose was that of France. From the age of Louis Treize, or perhaps of Henri Quatre, to the Revolution, this species of chamber memoirs — this eaves-dropping biography — prevailed so as to strangle authentic history. The parasitical plant absolutely killed the supporting tree. And one remark we will venture to make on that fact; the French literature would have been killed, and the national mind reduced to the *strulbrug* condition, had it not been for the situation of France amongst other great kingdoms, making her liable to potent reactions from them. The Memoirs of France, that is, the valet-de-chambre's archives substituted for the statesman's, the ambassador's, the soldier's, the politician's, would have extinguished all other historic composition, as in fact they nearly did, but for the insulation of France amongst nations with more masculine habits of thought. That saved France

Rome had no such advantage ; and Rome gave way. The props, the buttresses, of the Roman intellect, were all cancered and honeycombed by this dry-rot in her political energies. One excuse there is : storms yield tragedies for the historian ; the dead calms of a universal monarchy leave him little but personal memoranda. In such a case he is nothing, if he is not anecdotal.

V. — Secondly, we infer the barbarism of Rome, and the increasing barbarism, from the inconceivable ignorance which prevailed throughout the Western Empire, as to the most interesting public facts that were not taken down on the spot by a *tachygraphus* or short-hand reporter. Let a few years pass, and everything was forgotten about everybody. Within a few years after the death of Aurelian, though a kind of saint amongst the armies and the populace of Rome, (for to the Senate he was odious,) no person could tell who was the Emperor's mother, or where she lived ; though she must have been a woman of station and notoriety in her lifetime, having been a high priestess at some temple unknown. Alexander Severus, a very interesting Cæsar, who recalls to an Englishman the idea of his own Edward the Sixth, both as a prince equally amiable, equally disposed to piety, equally to reforms, and because, like Edward, he was so placed with respect to the succession and position of his reign, between unnatural monsters and bloody exterminators, as to reap all the benefit of contrast and soft relief ; — this Alexander was assassinated. That was of course. But still, though the fact was of course, the motives often varied, and the circumstances varied ; and the

reader would be glad to know, in Shakspeare's language, 'for which of his virtues' it was deemed requisite to murder him; as also, if it would not be too much trouble to the historian, who might be the murderers; and what might be their rank, and their names, and their recompense — whether a halter or a palace. But nothing of all this can be learned. And why? All had been forgotten.⁸ Lethe had sent all her waves over the whole transaction; and the man who wrote within thirty years, found no vestige recoverable of the imperial murder more than you or we, reader, would find at this day, if we should search for fragments of that imperial tent in which the murder happened. Again, with respect to the princes who succeeded immediately to their part of the Augustan history now surviving, princes the most remarkable, and *cardinal* to the movement of history, viz., Dioclesian and Constantine, many of the weightiest transactions in their lives are washed out as by a sponge. Did Dioclesian hang himself in his garters? or did he die in his bed? Nobody knows. And if Dioclesian hanged himself, why did Dioclesian hang himself? Nobody can guess. Did Constantine, again, marry a second wife? — did this second wife fall in love with her step-son Crispus? — did she, in resentment of his scorn, bear false witness against him to his father? — did his father, in consequence, put him to death? What an awful domestic tragedy! — was it true? Nobody knows. On the one hand, Eusebius does not so much as allude to it; but, on the other hand, Eusebius had his golden reasons for favoring Constantine, and this was a matter to be hushed up rather than blazoned. Tell it not in Gath. Publish it not

in Askelon! Then again, on the one hand, the tale seems absolutely a leaf torn out of the Hippolytus of Euripides. It is the identical story, only the name is changed; Constantine is Theseus, his new wife is Phædra, Crispus is Hippolytus. So far it seems rank with forgery. Yet again, on the other hand, such a duplicate did *bonâ fide* occur in modern history. Such a domestic tragedy was actually rehearsed, with one unimportant change; such a leaf was positively torn out of Euripides. Philip II. played the part of Theseus, Don Carlos the part of Hippolytus, and the Queen filled the situation (without the *animus*) of Phædra. Again, therefore, one is reduced to blank ignorance, and the world will never know the true history of the Cæsar who first gave an establishment and an earthly throne to Christianity, because history had slept the sleep of death before that Cæsar's time, and because the great muse of history had descended from Parnassus, and was running about Cæsar's palace in the bed-gown and slippers of a chambermaid.

Many hundred of similar *lacunæ* we could assign, with regard to facts the most indispensable to be known; but we must hurry onwards. Meantime, let the reader contrast with this dearth of primary facts in the history of the empire, and their utter extinction after even the lapse of twenty years, the extreme circumstantiality of the republican history, through many centuries back.

VI.—Thirdly, we infer the growing barbarism of Rome, that is, of the Roman people, as well as the Roman armies, from the brutal, bloody, and Tartar style of their festal exultations after victory, and the

Moloch sort of character, and functions with which they gradually invested their great Sultan, the Cæsar. One of the *ballisteia*, that is, the *ballets* or dances carried through scenes and representative changes, which were performed by the soldiery and by the mobs of Rome upon occasion of any triumphal display, has been preserved, in so far as relates to the words which accompanied the performance; for there was always a verbal accompaniment to the choral parts of the *ballisteia*. These words ran thus:—

‘Mille, mille, mille, mille, mille, mille, [six times repeated] decollavimus
 Unus homo mille, mille, mille, mille, [four times] decollavit
 Mille, mille, mille, vivat annos, qui mille, mille occidit
 Tantum vini habet nemo, quantum Cæsar fudit sanguinis.’

And again, a part of a *ballisteion* runs thus:—

‘Mille Francos, mille Sarmatas, semel occidimus :
 Mille, mille, mille, mille, Persas querimus.’

But, in reality, the national mind was convulsed and revolutionized by many causes; and we may be assured that it must have been so, both as a cause and as an effect, before that mind could have contemplated with steadiness the fearful scene of Turkish murder and bloodshed going on forever in high places. The palace floors in Rome actually rocked and quaked with assassination: snakes were sleeping forever beneath the flowers and palms of empire: the throne was built upon coffins: and any Christian who had read the Apocalypse, whenever he looked at the altar consecrated to Cæsar, on which the sacred fire was burning forever in the Augustan halls, must have seen below them ‘the souls of those who had been martyred,’ and have fancied that he heard them crying out to the angel of retribution—‘How long? O Lord! how long?’

Gibbon has left us a description, not very powerful, of a case which is all-powerful of itself, and needs no expansion, — the case of a state criminal vainly attempting to escape or hide himself from Cæsar — from the arm wrapped in clouds, and stretching over kingdoms alike, or oceans, that arrested and drew back the wretch to judgment — from the inevitable eye that slept not nor slumbered, and from which, neither Alps interposing, nor immeasurable deserts, nor trackless seas, nor a four months' flight, nor perfect innocence could screen him. The world — the world of civilization, was Cæsar's : and he who fled from the wrath of Cæsar, said to himself, of necessity — ‘If I go down to the sea, there is Cæsar on the shore ; if I go into the sands of Bilidulgerid, there is Cæsar waiting for me in the desert ; if I take the wings of the morning, and go to the utmost recesses of wild beasts, there is Cæsar before me.’ All this makes the condition of a criminal under the Western Empire terrific, and the condition even of a subject perilous. But how strange it is, or would be so, had Gibbon been a man of more sensibility, that he should have overlooked the converse of the case, viz., the terrific condition of Cæsar, amidst the terror which he caused to others. In fact, both conditions were full of despair. But Cæsar's was the worst, by a great pre-eminence ; for the state criminal could not be made such without his own concurrence ; for one moment, at least, it had been within his choice to be no criminal at all ; and therfor him the thunderbolts of Cæsar slept. But Cæsar had rarely any choice as to his own election ; and for him, therefore, the dagger of the assassin never could deep. Other men's houses, other men's bedchambers.

were generally asylums ; but for Cæsar, his own palace had not the privileges of a home. His own armies were no guards — his own pavilion, rising in the very centre of his armies sleeping around him, was no sanctuary. In all these places had Cæsar many times been murdered. All these pledges and sanctities — his household gods, the majesty of the empire, the ‘sacramentum militare,’ — all had given way, all had yawned beneath his feet.

The imagination of man can frame nothing so awful — the experience of man has witnessed nothing so awful, as the situation and tenure of the Western Cæsar. The danger which threatened him was like the pestilence which walketh in darkness, but which also walketh in noon-day. Morning and evening, summer and winter, brought no change or shadow of turning to this particular evil. In that respect it enjoyed the immunities of God — it was the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. After three centuries it had lost nothing of its virulence ; it was growing worse continually : the heart of man ached under the evil, and the necessity of the evil. Can any man measure the sickening fear which must have possessed the hearts of the ladies and the children composing the imperial family ? To them the mere terror, entailed like an inheritance of leprosy upon their family above all others, must have made it a woe like one of the evils in the Revelations — such in its infliction — such in its inevitability. It was what Pagan language denominated ‘a *sacred* danger ;’ a danger charmed and consecrated against human alleviation.

At length, but not until about three hundred and twenty years of murder had elapsed from the inaugu-

real murder of the great imperial founder, Dioclesian rose, and as a last resource of despair, said, let us multiply our image, and try if that will discourage our murderers. Like Kehama, entering the eight gates of Padalon at once, and facing himself eight times over, he appointed an assessor for himself; and each of these co-ordinate Augusti having a subordinate Cæsar, there were in fact four coeval emperors. Cæsar enjoyed a perfect *alibi*: like the royal ghost in Hamlet, Cæsar was *hic et ubique*. And unless treason enjoyed the same ubiquity, now, at least, one would have expected that Cæsar might sleep in security. But murder—imperial murder—is a Briareus. There was a curse upon the throne of Western Rome: it rocked like the sea, and for some mysterious reason could not find rest; and few princes were more memorably afflicted than the immediate successors to this arrangement.

A nation living in the bosom of these funereal convulsions, this endless billowy oscillation of prosperous murder and thrones overturned, could not have been moral; and therefore could not have reached a high civilization, had other influences favored. No causes act so fatally on public morality as convulsions in the state. And against Rome, all other influences combined. It was a period of awful transition. It was a period of tremendous conflict between all false religions in the world, (for thirty thousand gods were worshipped in Rome,) and a religion too pure to be comprehended. That light could not be comprehended by that darkness. And, in strict philosophic truth, Christianity did not reach its mature period, even of infancy, until the days of the Protestant

Reformation. In Rome it has always blended with Paganism : it does so to this day. But *then*, *i. e.* up to Dioclesian, (or the period of the Augustan history,) even that sort of Christianity, even this foul adulteration of Christianity, had no national influence. Even a pure and holy religion, therefore, by arraying demoniac passions on the side of Paganism, contributed to the barbarizing of Western Rome.

VII. — Finally, we infer the barbarism of Rome from the condition of her current literature. Anything more contemptible than the literature of Western (or indeed of Eastern) Rome after Trajan, it is not possible to conceive. Claudian, and two or three others, about the times of Carinus, are the sole writers in verse through a period of four centuries. Writers in prose there are none after Tacitus and the younger Pliny. Nor in Greek literature is there one man of genius after Plutarch, excepting Lucian. As to Libanius, he would have been ‘a decent priest where monkeys are the gods ;’ and he was worthy to fumigate with his leaden censer, and with incense from such dull weeds as root themselves in Lethe, that earthly idol of modern infidels, the shallow but at the same time stupid Julian. Upon this subject, however, we may have two summary observations to make :— 1st, It is a fatal ignorance in disputing, and has lost many a good cause, not to perceive on which side rests the *onus* of proof. Here, because on our allegation the proposition to be proved would be negative, the *onus probandi* must lie with our opponents. For we peremptorily affirm, that from Trajan downwards, there was no literature in Rome. To prove a negative is impossible. But any opponent,

who takes the affirmative side, and says there *was*, will find it easy to refute us. Only be it remembered, that one swallow does not make a summer. 2dly, (Which, if true, ought to make all writers on general literature ashamed,) we maintain — that in any one period of sixty years, in any one of those centuries which we call so familiarly the Dark Ages, (yes, even in the 10th or 11th,) we engage to name more and better books as the product of the period given, than were produced in the whole three hundred and fifty years from Trajan to Honorius and Attila. Here, therefore, is at once a great cause, a great effect, and a great exponent of the barbarism which had overshadowed the Western Empire before either Goth or Vandal had gained a settlement in the land. The quality of their history, the tenure of the Cæsars, the total abolition of literature, and the convulsion of public morals, — these were the **true key to the Roman decay.**

GREECE UNDER THE ROMANS.

WITH A

REFERENCE TO MR. GEORGE FINLAY'S WORK UPON
THAT SUBJECT

WHAT is called *Philosophical History* I believe to be yet in its infancy. It is the profound remark of Mr. Finlay — profound as I myself understand it — *i. e.*, in relation to this philosophical treatment, “That history will ever remain inexhaustible.” How inexhaustible? Are the *facts* of history inexhaustible? In regard to the *ancient* division of history with which he is there dealing, this would be in no sense true; and in any case it would be a lifeless truth. So entirely have the mere facts of Pagan history been disinterred, ransacked, sifted, that except by means of some chance medal that may be unearthed in the illiterate East (as of late towards Bokhara), or by means of some mysterious inscription, such as those which still mock the learned traveller in Persia, northwards near Hamadan (Ecbatana), and southwards at Persepolis, or those which distract him amongst the shadowy ruins of Yucatan (Uxmal, suppose, and Palenque) — once for all, barring these pure godsend, it is hardly “in the dice” that any downright novelty of fact could remain in reversion for this nineteenth century.

The merest possibility exists, that in Armenia, or in a Græco-Russian monastery on Mount Athos, or in Pompeii, &c., some authors hitherto *ανεκδοτοι* may yet be concealed; and by a channel in that degree improbable, it is possible that certain new facts of history may still reach us. But else, and failing these cryptical or subterraneous currents of communication, for us the record is closed. History in that sense has come to an end, and is sealed up as by the angel in the Apocalypse. What then? The facts *so* understood are but the dry bones of the mighty past. And the question arises here also, not less than in that sublimest of prophetic visions, “Can these dry bones live?” Not only can they live, but by an infinite variety of life. The same historic facts, viewed in different lights, or brought into connection with other facts, according to endless diversities of permutation and combination, furnish grounds for such eternal successions of new speculations as make the facts themselves virtually new, and virtually endless. The same Hebrew words are read by different sets of vowel points, and the same hieroglyphics are deciphered by keys everlastingly varied.

To me, I repeat that oftentimes it seems as though the *science* of history were yet scarcely founded. There will be such a science, if at present there is not; and in one feature of its capacities it will resemble chemistry. What is so familiar to the perceptions of man as the common chemical agents of water, air, and the soil on which we tread? Yet each one of these elements is a mystery to this day; handled, used, tried, searched experimentally, combined in ten thousand ways — it is

still unknown; fathomed by recent science down to a certain depth, it is still probably by its destiny unfathomable. Even to the end of days, it is pretty certain that the minutest particle of earth — that a dew-drop scarcely distinguishable as a separate object — that the slenderest filament of a plant — will include within itself secrets inaccessible to man. And yet, compared with the mystery of man himself, these physical worlds of mystery are but as a radix of infinity. Chemistry is in this view mysterious and spinosistically sublime — that it is the science of the latent in all things, of all things as lurking in all. Within the lifeless flint, within the silent pyrites, slumbers an agony of potential combustion. Iron is imprisoned in blood. With cold water (as every child is now-a-days aware) you may lash a fluid into angry ebullitions of heat; with hot water, as with the rod of Amram's son, you may freeze a fluid down to the temperature of the Sarsar wind, provided only that you regulate the pressure of the air. The sultry and dissolving fluid shall bake into a solid, the petrific fluid shall melt into a liquid. Heat shall freeze, frost shall thaw; and wherfore? Simply because old things are brought together in new modes of combination. And in endless instances beside, we see in all elements the same Panlike latency of forms and powers, which gives to the external world a capacity of self-transformation, and of *poly-morphosis* absolutely inexhaustible.

But the same capacity belongs to the facts of history. And I do not mean merely that, from subjective differences in the minds reviewing them, such facts assume endless varieties of interpretation and estimate,

but that objectively, from lights still increasing in the science of government and of social philosophy, all the primary facts of history become liable continually to new presentations, to new combinations, and to new valuations of their moral relations. I have seen some kinds of marble, where the veinings happened to be unusually multiplied, in which human faces, figures, processions, or fragments of natural scenery, seemed absolutely illimitable, under the endless variations or inversions of the order, according to which they might be combined and grouped. Something analogous takes effect in reviewing the remote parts of history. Rome, for instance, has been the object of historic pens for twenty centuries (dating from Polybius); and yet hardly so much as twenty years have elapsed since Niebuhr opened upon us almost a new revelation, by re-combining the same eternal facts, according to a different set of principles. The same thing may be said, though not with the same degree of emphasis, upon the Grecian researches of the late Ottfried Mueller. Egyptian history again, even at this moment, is seen stealing upon us through the dusky twilight in its first distinct lineaments. Before Young, Champollion, Lepsius, and the others who have followed on their traces in this field of history, all was outer darkness; and whatsoever we *do* know or *shall* know of Egyptian Thebes will now be recovered as if from the unswathing of a mummy. Not until a flight of three thousand years has left Thebes the Hekatompylos a dusky speck in the far distance, have we even *begun* to read her annals, or to understand her revolutions.

Another instance I have now before me of this new

historic faculty for resuscitating the buried, and for calling back the breath to the frozen features of death, in Mr. Finlay's work upon the Greeks as related to the Roman Empire. He presents us with old facts, but under the purpose of clothing them with a new life. He rehearses ancient stories, not with the humble ambition of better adorning them, of more perspicuously narrating, or even of more forcibly pointing their moral, but of extracting from them some new meaning, and thus forcing them to arrange themselves, under some latent connection, with other phenomena now first detected, as illustrations of some great principle or agency now first revealing its importance. Mr. Finlay's style of intellect is appropriate to such a task; for it is subtle and Machiavelian. But there is this difficulty in doing justice to the novelty, and at times I may say with truth to the profundity of his views, that they are by necessity thrown out in continued successions of details, are insulated, and, in one word, *sporadic*. This follows from the very nature of his work; for it is a perpetual commentary on the incidents of Grecian history, from the era of the Roman conquest to the commencement of what Mr. Finlay, in a peculiar sense, calls the Byzantine Empire. These incidents have nowhere been systematically or continuously recorded; they come forward by casual flashes in the annals, perhaps, of some church historian, as they happen to connect themselves with his momentary theme; or they betray themselves in the embarrassments of the central government, whether at Rome or at Constantinople, when arguing at one time a pestilence, at another an insurrection, or at a third an inroad of

barbarians. It is not the fault of Mr. Finlay, but his great disadvantage, that the affairs of Greece have been thus discontinuously exhibited, and that its internal changes of condition have been never treated except indirectly, and by men *aliud agentibus*. The Grecian *race* had a primary importance on our planet; but the Grecian name, represented by Greece considered as a territory, or as the political seat of the Hellenic people, ceased to have much importance, in the eyes of historians, from the time when it became a conquered province; and it declined into absolute insignificance after the conquest of so many other provinces had degraded Hellas into an arithmetical unit, standing amongst a total amount of figures, so vast and so much more dazzling to the ordinary mind. Hence it was that in ancient times no complete history of Greece, through all her phases and stages, was conspicuously attempted. The greatness of her later revolutions, simply as changes, would have attracted the historian; but, as changes associated with calamity and loss of power, they repelled his curiosity, and alienated his interest. It is the very necessity, therefore, of Mr. Finlay's position, when coming into such an inheritance, that he must splinter his philosophy into separate individual notices; for the records of history furnish no grounds for more. *Spartam, quam nactus est, ornavit.* That ungenial province, which he has obtained by lot, he has beautified by his culture and treatment. But this does not remedy the difficulty for ourselves, in attempting to give a representative view of his philosophy. General abstractions he had no opportunity for presenting,

consequently we have no opportunity for valuing; and, on the other hand, single cases selected from a succession of hundreds, would not justify any *representative* criticism, more than the single brick, in the old anecdote of Hierocles, would serve representatively to appraise the house.

Under this difficulty as to the possible for myself, and the just for Mr. Finlay, I shall adopt the following course. So far as the Greek people collected themselves in any splendid manner with the Roman Empire, they did so with the eastern horn of that empire, and in point of time from the foundation of Constantinople as an eastern Rome, in the fourth century, to a period not fully agreed on; but for the moment I will say with Mr. Finlay, up to the early part of the eighth century. A reason given by Mr. Finlay for this latter date is, that about that time the Grecian blood, so widely diffused in Asia, and even in Africa, became finally detached by the progress of Mahometanism and Mahometan systems of power, from all further concurrence or coalition with the views of the Byzantine Cæsar. Constantinople was from that date thrown back more upon its own peculiar heritage and jurisdiction, of which the main resources for war and peace lay in Europe, and (speaking by the narrowest terms) in Thrace. Henceforth, therefore, for the city and throne of Constantine, resuming its old Grecian name of Byzantium, there succeeded a theatre less diffusive, a population more concentrated, a character of action more determinate and jealous, a style of courtly ceremonial more elaborate as well as more haughtily repulsive, and universally a system of

interests, as much more definite and selfish, as might naturally be looked for in a nation now everywhere surrounded by new thrones gloomy with malice, and swelling with the consciousness of youthful power. This new and final state of the eastern Rome, Mr. Finlay denominates the Byzantine Empire. Possibly this use of the term thus limited may be capable of justification ; but more questions would arise in the discussion than Mr. Finlay has thought it of importance to notice. And for the present I shall take the word *Byzantine* in its most ordinary acceptation, as denoting the local empire founded by Constantine in Byzantium, early in the fourth century, under the idea of a translation from the old western Rome, and overthrown by the Ottoman Turks in the year 1453. In the fortunes and main stages of this empire, what are the chief arresting phenomena, aspects, or relations to the greatest of modern interests ? I select by preference these : —

I. First, this was the earliest among the kingdoms of our planet *which connected itself with Christianity*. In Armenia, there had been a previous *state* recognition of Christianity. But *that* was neither splendid nor distinct. Whereas the Byzantine Rome built avowedly upon Christianity as its own basis, and consecrated its own nativity by the sublime act of founding the first provision ever attempted for the poor, considered simply as poor (i. e., *as objects of pity, not as instruments of ambition*).

II. Secondly, *as the great ægis of western Christendom*, nay, the barrier which made it possible that *any* Christendom should ever exist, this Byzantine Empire is entitled to a very different station in the enlightened

gratitude of us Western Europeans from any which it has yet held. I do not scruple to say, that, by comparison with the services of the Byzantine people to Europe, no nation on record has ever stood in the same relation to any other single nation, much less to a whole family of nations, whether as regards the opportunity and means of conferring benefits, or as regards the astonishing perseverance in supporting the succession of these benefits, or as regards the ultimate event of these benefits. A great wrong has been done for ages; for we have all been accustomed to speak of the Byzantine Empire with scorn,* as chiefly known by its effeminacy; and the greater is the call for a fervent palinode.

III. Thirdly, in a reflex way, as the one great danger which overshadowed Europe for generations, and against which the Byzantine Empire proved the capital bulwark, Mahometanism may rank as one of the Byzantine aspects or counterforces. And if there is any popular error applying to the history of that great convulsion, as a political effort for revolutionizing the world, some notice of it will find a natural place in connection with these present trains of speculation.

* “*With scorn:*” — This has arisen from two causes: one is the habit of regarding the whole Roman Empire as in its “decline” from so early a period as that of Commodus; agreeably to which conceit, it would naturally follow that, during its latter stages, the Eastern Empire must have been absolutely in its dotage. If already declining in the second century, then, from the tenth to the fifteenth, it must have been paralytic and bedridden. The other cause may be found in the accidental but reasonable hostility of the Byzantine court to the first Crusaders, as also in the disadvantageous comparison with respect to manly virtues between the simplicity of these western children, and the refined dissimulation of the Byzantines.

Let me, therefore, have permission to throw together a few remarks on these three subjects—1. On the remarkable distinction by which the eldest of Christian rulers proclaimed and inaugurated the Christian basis of his empire; 2. On the true but forgotten relation of this great empire to our modern Christendom, under which idea I comprehend Europe, and *reversionally* the whole continent of America; 3. On the false pretensions of Mahometanism, whether advanced by itself or by inconsiderate Christian speculators on its behalf. I shall thus obtain this advantage, that some sort of unity will be given to my own glances at Mr. Finlay's theme; and, at the same time, by gathering under these general heads any dispersed comments of Mr. Finlay, whether for confirmation of my own views, or for any purpose of objection to his, I shall give to those comments also that kind of unity, by means of a reference to a common purpose, which I could not have given them by citing each independently for itself.

I. First, then, as to that memorable act by which Constantinople (*i. e.*, the Eastern Empire) connected herself forever with Christianity — viz., the recognition of pauperism as an element in the state entitled to the maternal guardianship of the state. In this new principle, introduced by Christianity, we behold a far-seeing or proleptic wisdom, making provision for evils before they had arisen; for it is certain that great expansions of pauperism did not exist in the ancient world. A pauper population is a disease peculiar to the modern or Christian world. Various causes latent in the social systems of the ancients prevented such

developments of surplus people. But does not this argue a superiority in the social arrangements of these ancients? Not at all; they were atrociously worse. They evaded this one morbid affection by means of others far more injurious to the moral advance of man. The case was then everywhere as at this day it is in Persia. A Persian ambassador to London or Paris might boast that, in his native Irân, no such spectacles existed of hunger-bitten myriads as may be seen everywhere during seasons of distress in the crowded cities of Christian Europe. "No," would be the answer, "most certainly not; but why? The reason is, that your accursed form of society and government *intercepts* such surplus people, does not suffer them to be born. What is the result? You ought, in Persia, to have three hundred millions of people; your vast territory is easily capacious of that number. You *have*—how many have you? Something less than eight millions." Think of this, startled reader. But, if *that* be a good state of things, then any barbarous soldier who makes a wilderness is entitled to call himself a great philosopher and public benefactor. This is to cure the headache by amputating the head. Now, the same principle of limitation to population *a parte ante*, though not in the same savage excess as in Mahometan Persia, operated upon Greece and Rome. The whole Pagan world escaped the evils of redundant population by vicious repressions of it beforehand. But under Christianity a new state of things was destined to take effect. Many protections and excitements to population were laid in the framework of this new religion, which, by its new code of rules and impulses

in so many ways extended the free agency of human beings. Manufacturing industry was destined first to arise on any great scale under Christianity. Except in Tyre and Alexandria (see the Emperor Hadrian's account of this last), there was no town or district in the ancient world where the populace could be said properly to work. The rural laborers worked a little — not much ; and sailors worked a little ; nobody else worked at all. Even slaves had little more work distributed amongst each ten than now settles upon one. And in many other ways, by protecting the principle of life, as a mysterious sanctity, Christianity has favored the development of an excessive population. There it is that Christianity, being answerable for the mischief, is answerable for its redress. Therefore it is that, breeding the disease, Christianity breeds the cure. Extending the vast lines of poverty, Christianity it was that first laid down the principle of a relief for poverty. Constantine, the first Christian potentate, laid the first stone of the mighty overshadowing institution since reared in Christian lands to poverty, disease, orphanage, and mutilation. Christian instincts, moving and speaking through that Cæsar, first carried out that great idea of Christianity. Six years was Christianity in building Constantinople, and in the seventh she rested from her labors, saying, “ Henceforward let the poor man have a haven of rest forever ; a rest from his work for one day in seven ; a rest from his anxieties by a legal and fixed relief.” Being legal, it could not be open to disturbances of caprice in the giver ; being fixed, it was not open to disturbances of miscalculation in the receiver. Now, first, when first

Christianity was installed as a public organ of government (and first owned a distinct political responsibility), did it become the duty of a religion which assumed, as it were, the *official* tutelage of poverty, to proclaim and consecrate that function by some great memorial precedent. And, accordingly, in testimony of that obligation, the first Christian Cæsar, on behalf of Christianity, founded the first system of relief for pauperism. It is true, that largesses from the public treasury, gratuitous corn, or corn sold at diminished rates, not to mention the *sportulæ* or stated doles of private Roman nobles, had been distributed amongst the indigent citizens of Western Rome for centuries before Constantine ; but all these had been the selfish bounties of factious ambition or intrigue.

To Christianity was reserved the inaugural act of public charity in the spirit of charity. We must remember that no charitable or beneficent institutions of any kind, grounded on disinterested kindness, existed among the Pagan Romans, and still less amongst the Pagan Greeks. Mr. Coleridge, in one of his lay sermons, advanced the novel doctrine, that in the Scripture is contained all genuine and profound statesmanship. Of course he must be understood to mean, in its capital principles ; for, as to subordinate and executive rules for applying such principles, these, doubtless, are in part suggested by the local circumstances in each separate case. Now, amongst the political theories of the Bible is this, that pauperism is not an accident in the constitution of states, but an indefeasible necessity ; or, in the Scriptural words, that “the poor shall never cease out of the land.” This theory,

or great canon of social philosophy during many centuries drew no especial attention from philosophers. It passed for a truism, bearing no particular emphasis or meaning beyond some general purpose of sanction to the impulses of charity. But there is good reason to believe that it slumbered, and was meant to slumber, until Christianity arising and moving forwards should call it into a new life, as a principle suited to a new order of things. Accordingly, we have seen of late that this Scriptural dictum — “The poor shall never cease out of the land” — has terminated its career as a truism (that is, as a truth, either obvious on one hand, or inert on the other), and has wakened into a polemic or controversial life. People arose who took upon them utterly to deny the Scriptural doctrine. Peremptorily they challenged the assertion, that poverty must always exist. The Bible said, that it was an affection of human society which could not be exterminated; the economist of 1800 said that it was a foul disease which must and should be exterminated. The Scriptural philosophy said, that pauperism was inalienable from man’s social condition, in the same way that decay was inalienable from his flesh. “I shall soon see *that*,” said the economist of 1800, “for as sure as my name is Malthus, I will have this poverty put down by law within one generation, if there’s a law to be had in the courts of Westminster.” The Scriptures have left word, that, if any man should come to the national banquet, declaring himself unable to pay his contribution, that man should be accounted the guest of Christianity, and should be privileged to sit at the table in thankful remembrance of what Christianity had done

for man But Mr. Malthus left word with all the servants, that, if any man should present himself under those circumstances, he was to be told, “the table is full” (*his words, not mine*) ; “go away, good man.” Go away ! Mr. Malthus ? Whither ? In what direction ? — “Why, if you come to *that*,” said the man of 1800, “to any ditch that he prefers : surely there’s good choice of ditches for the most fastidious taste.” During twenty years — viz., from 1800 to 1820 — this new philosophy, which substituted a ditch for a dinner, and a paving-stone for a loaf, prevailed and prospered. At one time it seemed likely enough to prove a snare to our own aristocracy — the noblest of all ages. But that peril was averted, and the further history of the case was this : By the year 1820, much discussion having passed to and fro, serious doubts had arisen in many quarters ; scepticism had begun to arm itself against the sceptic ; the economist of 1800 was no longer quite sure of his ground. He was now suspected of being fallible ; and what seemed of worse augury, he was beginning himself to suspect as much. To one capital blunder he was obliged publicly to plead guilty. What it was I shall have occasion to mention immediately. Meantime it was justly thought that, in a dispute loaded with such prodigious practical consequences, good sense and prudence demanded a more extended inquiry than had yet been instituted. Whether poverty would ever cease from the land, might be doubted by those who balanced their faith in Scripture against their faith in the man of 1800. But this at least could not be doubted — that as yet poverty *had* not ceased, nor indeed had made any sensible

preparations for ceasing, from any land in Europe. It was a clear case, therefore, that, howsoever Europe might please to dream upon the matter, when pauperism should have reached that glorious euthanasia predicted by the alchemist of old and the economist of 1800, for the present she must deal actively with her own pauperism on some avowed plan and principle, good or evil — gentle or harsh. Accordingly, along the line of years between 1820 and 1830, inquiries were made through our consuls of every state in Europe, what *were* those plans and principles. For it was justly said — “As one step towards judging rightly of our own system, now that it has been so clamorously challenged for a bad system, let us learn what it is that other nations think upon the subject, but above all what it is that they *do*.” The answers to our many inquiries varied considerably; and some amongst the most enlightened nations appear to have adopted the good old plan of *laissez faire*, giving nothing from any public fund to the pauper, but authorizing him to levy contributions on that gracious allegoric lady, Private Charity, wherever he could meet her taking the air with her babes. This reference appeared to be the main one in reply to any application of the pauper; and for all the rest they referred him generally to the “ditch,” or to his own unlimited choice of ditches, according to the approved method of public benevolence published in 4to and in 8vo by the man of 1800. But there were other and humbler states in Europe, whose very pettiness had brought more fully within their vision the whole machinery and watchwork of pauperism, as it acted and reacted

on the industrious poverty of the land, and on other interests, by means of the system adopted in relieving it. From these states came many interesting reports, all tending to some good purpose. But at last, and before the year 1830, amongst other results of more or less value, three capital points were established, not more decisive for the justification of the English system in administering national relief to paupers, and of all systems that revered the authority of Scripture, than they were for the overthrow of Mr. Malthus, the man of 1800. These three points are worthy of being used as buoys in mapping out the true channels, or indicating the breakers on this difficult line of navigation ; and I now rehearse them. They may seem plain almost to obviousness ; but it is enough that they involve all the disputed questions of the case.

First, that, in spite of the assurances from economists, no progress whatever had been made by England, or by any state in this world, which lent any sanction to the hope of ever eradicating poverty from society.

Secondly, that, in absolute contradiction to the whole hypothesis relied on by Malthus and his brethren, in its most fundamental doctrine, a legal provision for poverty did *not* act as a bounty on marriage. There went to wreck the oasis of the Malthus philosophy. The experience of England, where the trial had been made on the largest scale, was decisive on this point ; and the opposite experience of Ireland, under the opposite circumstances, was equally decisive. And this result had made itself so clear by 1820, that even Malthus (as I have already noticed by anticipation)

was compelled to publish a recantation as to this particular error, which in effect was a recantation of his entire theory.

Thirdly, that, according to the concurring experience of all the most enlightened states in Christendom, the public suffered least (not merely in molestation, but in money), pauperism benefited most, and the growth of pauperism was retarded most, precisely as the provision for the poor had been legalized as to its obligation, and fixed as to its amount. Left to individual discretion, the burden was found to press most unequally; and, on the other hand, the evil itself of pauperism, whilst much less effectually relieved, nevertheless, through the irregular action of this relief, was much more powerfully stimulated.

Such is the abstract of our latest public warfare on this great question through a period of nearly fifty years. And the issue is this: starting from the contemptuous defiance of the Scriptural doctrine upon the necessity of making provision for poverty as an indispensable element in civil communities (*the poor shall never cease out of the land*), the economy of the age has lowered its tone by graduated descents, in each one successively of the four last *decennia*. The philosophy of the day, as to this point at least, is at length in coincidence with Scripture. And thus the very extensive researches of this nineteenth century, as to pauperism, have reacted with the effect of a full justification upon Constantine's attempt to connect the foundation of his empire with that new theory of Christianity upon the imperishableness of poverty and upon the duties corresponding to it.

Meantime, Mr. Finlay denies that Christianity had been raised by Constantine into the religion of the state, and others have denied that, in the extensive money privileges conceded to Constantinople, he contemplated any but political principles. As to the first point, I apprehend that Constantine will be found not so much to have shrunk back from fear of installing Christianity in the seat of supremacy, as to have diverged in policy from our modern *methods* of such an installation. My own belief is, that, according to *his* notion of a state religion, he supposed himself to have conferred that distinction upon Christianity. With respect to the endowments and privileges of Constantinople, they were various; some lay in positive donations, others in immunities and exemptions; some, again, were designed to attract strangers, others to attract nobles from old Rome. But, with fuller opportunities for pursuing that discussion, I think it might be possible to show, that, in more than one of his institutions and his decrees, he had contemplated the special advantage of the poor considered *as* poor; and that, next after the august distinction of having founded the Christian throne, he had meant to challenge and fix the gaze of future ages upon this glorious pretension—viz., that he first had executed the Scriptural injunction to make a provision for the poor, *as an order of society* that by laws immutable should “never cease out of the land.”

II. Let me advert to the value and functions of Constantinople as the tutelary genius of western or lawnirg Christianity.

The history of Constantinople, or more generally

of the eastern Roman Empire, wears a peculiar interest to the children of Christendom; and for two separate reasons—first, as being the narrow isthmus or bridge which connects the two continents of ancient and modern history, and *that* is a philosophic interest; but, secondly, which in the very highest degree is a practical interest, as the record of our earthly salvation from Mahometanism. On two horns was Europe assaulted by the Moslems: first, last, and through the largest tract of time, on the horn of Constantinople; there the contest raged for more than eight hundred years; and by the time that the mighty bulwark fell (1453), Vienna and other cities near the Danube had found leisure for growing up; Hungary had grown up; Poland had grown up; so that, if one range of Alps had slowly been surmounted, another had now embattled itself against the westward progress of the Crescent. On the westward horn, *in* France, but *by* Germans, once for all Charles Martel had arrested the progress of the fanatical Moslem almost in a single battle; certainly a single generation saw the whole danger dispersed, inasmuch as within that space the Saracens were effectually forced back into their Spanish lair. This demonstrates pretty forcibly the difference of the Mahometan resources as applied to the western and the eastern struggle. To throw the whole weight of that difference, a difference in the result as between eight centuries and thirty years, upon the mere difference of energy in German and Byzantine forces, as though the first did, by a rapturous fervor, in a few revolutions of summer, what the other had protracted through nearly a millennium, is a representation which

defeats itself by its own extravagance. To prove too much, is more dangerous than to prove too little. The fact is, that vast armies and mighty nations were continually disposable for the war upon the city of Constantine; nations had time to arise in juvenile vigor, to grow old and superannuated, to melt away, and totally to disappear, in that long struggle on the Hellespont and Propontis. It was a struggle which might often intermit and slumber; armistices there might be, truces, or unproclaimed suspensions of war out of mutual exhaustion; but peace there could *not* be, because any resting from the duty of hatred between races that reciprocally seemed to lay the foundations of their creed in a dishonoring of God, was impossible to aspiring human nature. Malice and mutual hatred, I repeat, became a duty in those circumstances. Why had they *begun* to fight? Personal feuds there had been none between the parties. For the early caliphs did not conquer Syria and other vast provinces of the Roman Empire, because they had a quarrel with the Cæsars who represented Christendom; but, on the contrary, they had a quarrel with the Cæsars because they had conquered Syria; or, at the most, the conquest and the feud (if not always lying in that exact succession as cause and effect) were joint effects from a common cause, which cause was imperishable as death or the ocean, and as deep as are the fountains of life. Could the ocean be altered by a sea-fight, or the atmosphere be tainted forever by an earthquake? As little could any single reign or its events affect the feud of the Moslem and the Christian; a feud which could not cease unless God could change, or unless

man (becoming careless of spiritual things) should sink to the level of a brute.

These are considerations of great importance in weighing the value of the Eastern Empire. If the cause and interest of Islamism, as against Christianity, were undying, then we may be assured that the Moorish infidels of Spain did not reiterate their trans-Pyrenean expeditions after one generation — simply because they *could* not. But we know that on the south-eastern horn of Europe they *could*, upon the plain argument that for many centuries they *did*. Over and above this, I am of opinion that the Saracens were unequal to the sort of hardships bred by cold climates; and *there* lay another repulsion for Saracens from France, &c., and not merely the Carlovingian sword. We children of Christendom show our innate superiority to the children of the Orient upon this scale or tariff of acclimatizing powers. We travel as wheat travels, through all reasonable ranges of temperature; they, like rice, can migrate only to warm latitudes. They cannot support our cold, but we *can* support the countervailing hardships of their heat. This cause alone would have weatherbound the Mussulmans forever within the Pyrenean cloisters. Mussulmans in cold latitudes look as much out of their element as sailors on horseback. Apart from which cause, we see that the fine old Visigothic races in Spain found their full employment up to the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, which reign first created a kingdom of Spain; in that reign the whole fabric of their power thawed away, and was confounded with forgotten things. Columbus, according to a local tra-

dition, was personally present at some of the latter campaigns in Grenada: he saw the last of them. So that the discovery of America may be used as a convertible date with that of extinction for the Saracen power in western Europe. True, that the overthrow of Constantinople had forerun this event by nearly half-a-century. But then I insist upon the different proportions of the struggle. Whilst in Spain a province had fought against a province, all Asia militant had fought against the eastern Roman Empire. Amongst the many races whom dimly we descry in those shadowy hosts, tilting for ages in the vast plains of Angora, are seen latterly pressing on to the van two mighty powers, the children of Persia and the Ottoman family of the Turks. Upon these nations—the one heretical, the other orthodox, and more accurately Mahometan than Mahomet, both now rapidly decaying—the faith of Mahomet has ever leaned as upon her eldest sons; and these powers, both the right and the wrong, the Byzantine Caesars had to face in every phasis of Moslem energy, as it revolved from perfect barbarism, through semi-barbarism, to that crude form of civilization which Mahometans can support. And through all these transmigrations of their power, we must remember that they were under a martial training and discipline, never suffered to become effeminate. One set of warriors after another did, it is true, become effeminate in Persia: but, upon that advantage opening, always another set stepped in from Torkistan or from the Imaus. The nation, as individuals, melted away; the Moslem armies were immortal.

Here, therefore, it is, and standing at this point of my review, that I complain of Mr. Finlay's too facile compliance with historians far beneath himself. He throws away his own advantages: oftentimes his commentaries on the past are ebullient with subtlety; and his fault strikes me as lying even in the excess of his sagacity applying itself too often to a basis of facts, quite insufficient for supporting the superincumbent weight of his speculations. But in the instance before us he surrenders himself too readily to the ordinary current of history. How would *he* like it, if he happened to be a Turk himself, finding his nation thus implicitly undervalued? For clearly, in undervaluing the Byzantine resistance, he *does* undervalue the Mahometan assault. Advantages of local situation cannot *eternally* make good the deficiencies of man. If the Byzantines (being as weak as historians would represent them) yet for ages resisted the whole impetus of Mahometan Asia, then it follows, either that the Crescent was correspondingly weak, or that, not being weak, she must have found the Cross pretty strong. The *fact* of history does not here correspond with the numerical items.

Nothing has ever surprised me more, I will frankly own, than this coincidence of authors in treating the Byzantine Empire as feeble and crazy. On the contrary, to me it is clear that some secret and preternatural strength it must have had, lurking where the eye of man did not in those days penetrate, or by what miracle did it undertake our universal Christian cause fight for us all, keep the waters open from freezing us up, and through nine centuries prevent the ice of Ma-

nometanism from closing over our heads forever? Yet does Mr. Finlay describe this empire as laboring, in A. D. 623, equally with Persia, under "internal weakness," and as "equally incapable of offering any popular or national resistance to an active or enterprising enemy." In this Mr. Finlay does but agree with other able writers; but he and they should have recollect ed. that hardly had that very year 623 departed, even yet the knell of its last hour was sounding upon the winds, when this effeminate empire had occasion to show that she could clothe herself with consuming terrors, as a belligerent both defensive and aggressive. In the absence of her great emperor,* and of the main imperial forces, the golden capital herself, by her own resources, routed and persecuted into wrecks a Persian army that had come down upon her by stealth and a fraudulent circuit. Even at that same period, she advanced into Persia more than a thousand miles from her own metropolis in Europe, under the blazing ensigns of the Cross, kicked the crown of Persia to and fro like a tennis-ball, upset the throne of Artaxerxes, countersigned haughtily the elevation of a new *Basileus* more friendly to herself, and then recrossed the Tigris homewards, after having torn forcibly out of the heart and palpitating entrails of Persia whatever trophies that empire had formerly, in her fire-worshipping stage, wrested from herself. These were not the acts of an effeminate kingdom. In the language of Wordsworth we may say —

" All power was given her in the dreadful trance;
Infidel kings she wither'd like a flame."

* *Heraclius*; which name ought not to have the stress laid on the antepenultimate (*ruc*), but on the penultimate (*i*)

Indeed, no image that I remember can do justice to the first of these acts, except that Spanish legend of the Cid, which tells us that, long after the death of the mighty cavalier, when the children of those Moors who had fled from his face whilst living were insulting the marble statue above his grave, suddenly the statue raised its right arm, stretched out its marble lance, and drifted the heathen dogs like snow. The mere sanctity of the Christian champion's sepulchre was its own protection ; and so we must suppose that, when the Persian hosts came by surprise upon Constantinople — her natural protector being absent by three months' march — simply the golden statues of the mighty Cæsars, half rising on their thrones, must have caused that sudden panic which dissipated the danger. Hardly fifty years later, Mr. Finlay well knows that Constantinople again stood an assault — not from a Persian hourrah or tempestuous surprise, but from a vast expedition, armaments by land and sea, fitted out elaborately in the early noontide of Mahometan vigor — and that assault also, in the presence of the caliph and the crescent, was gloriously discomfited. Now if, in the moment of triumph, some voice in the innumerable crowd had cried out, “ How long shall this great Christian breakwater, against which are shattered into surge and foam all the mountainous billows of idolators and misbelievers, stand up on behalf of infant Christendom ? ” and if from the clouds some trumpet of prophecy had replied, “ Even yet for eight hundred years ! ” could any man have persuaded himself that such a fortress against such antagonists — such a monument against such a millennium of fury — was to be classec

amongst the weak things of the earth? This oriental Rome, it is true, equally with Persia, was liable to sudden inroads and incursions. But the difference was this — Persia was strongly protected in all ages by the wilderness on her main western frontier; if this were passed, and a hand-to-hand conflict succeeded, where light cavalry or fugitive archers could be of little value, the essential weakness of the Persian Empire then betrayed itself. Her sovereign was then assassinated, and peace was obtained from the condescension of the invader. But the enemies of Constantinople — Goths, Avars, Bulgarians, or even Persians — were strong only by their weakness. Being contemptible, they were neglected; being chased, they made no stand; being prostrate, they capitulated; and *thus* only they escaped. They entered like thieves by means of darkness, and escaped like sheep by means of dispersion. But, if caught, they were annihilated. No; I resume my thesis; I close this head by reiterating my correction of history; I re-affirm my position, that in Eastern Rome lay the salvation of western and central Europe; in Constantinople and the Propontis lay the *sine quâ non* condition of any future Christendom. Emperor and people *must* have done their duty; the result, the vast extent of generations surmounted, furnish the triumphant demonstration. Finally, indeed, they fell, king and people, shepherd and flock; but by that time their mission was fulfilled. And doubtless, as the noble Palæologus lay on heaps of carnage, with his noble people, as life was ebbing away, a voice from heaven sounded in his ears the great words of the Hebrew prophet, “Behold! **your work is done;** your warfare is accomplished.”

III. Such, then, being the unmerited disparagement of the Byzantine government, and so great the ingratitudo of later Christendom to that sheltering power under which themselves enjoyed the leisure of a thousand years for knitting and expanding into strong nations ; on the other hand, what is to be thought of the Saracen anti-Byzantines ? Everywhere it has passed for a lawful postulate, that the Saracen conquests prevailed, half by the feebleness of the Roman government at Constantinople, and half by the preternatural energy infused into the Arabs by their false prophet and legislator. In either of its faces, this theory is falsified by a steady review of facts. With regard to the Saracens, Mr. Finlay thinks, as I do, and argues, that they prevailed through the *local*, or sometimes the *casual*, weakness of their immediate enemies, and rarely through any strength of their own. We must remember one fatal weakness of the imperial administration in those days, not due to men or to principles, but entirely to nature and the slow growth of scientific improvements — viz., the difficulties of locomotion. As respected Syria, Egypt, Cyrenaica, and so on to the most western provinces of Africa, the Saracens had advantages for moving rapidly which the Cæsar had not. But is not a water movement speedier than a land movement, which for an army never has much exceeded fourteen miles a-day ? Certainly it is ; but in this case there were two desperate defects in the imperial control over that water service. To use a fleet, you must have a fleet ; but their whole naval interest had been starved by the intolerable costs of the Persian war. Immense had

been the expenses of Heraclius, and annually decaying had been his Asiatic revenues. Secondly, the original position of the Arabs had been better than that of the emperor in every stage of the warfare which so suddenly arose. In Arabia the Arabs stood nearest to Syria, in Syria nearest to Egypt, in Egypt nearest to Cyrenaica. What reason had there been for expecting a martial legislator at that moment in Arabia, who should fuse and sternly combine her distracted tribes? What blame, therefore, to Heraclius, that Syria — the first object of assault, being also by much the weakest part of the empire, and immediately after the close of a desolating war — should in four campaigns be found indefensible? We must remember the unexampled abruptness of the Arabian revolution. The year six hundred and twenty-two, by its very name of Hegira, does not record a triumph, but a humiliation. In that year, therefore, and at the very moment when Heraclius was entering upon his long Persian struggle, Mahomet was yet prostrate, and his destiny was doubtful. Eleven years after — viz., in six hundred and thirty-three — the prophet was dead and gone; but his *first* successor was already in Syria as a conqueror. Such had been the velocity of events. The Persian war had then been finished by three years, but the exhaustion of the empire had perhaps, at that moment, reached its maximum. I am satisfied that ten years' repose from this extreme state of collapse would have shown us another result. Even as it was, and caught at 'his enormous disadvantage, Heraclius taught the robbers to tremble, and would have exterminated them, if not baffled by two irremedi-

able calamities, neither of them due to any act or neglect of his own. The first lay in the treason of his lieutenants. The governors of Damascus, of Aleppo, of Emesa, of Bostra, of Kinnisrin, all proved traitors. The root of this evil lay, probably, in the disorders following the Persian invasion, which had made it the perilous interest of the emperor to appoint great officers from amongst those who had a local influence. Such persons it might have been ruinous too suddenly to set aside; as, in the event, it proved ruinous to employ them. A dilemma of this kind, offering but a choice of evils, belonged to the nature of any Persian war; and that particular war was bequeathed to Heraclius by the management of his predecessors. The second calamity was even more fatal; it lay in the composition of the Syrian population, and its original want of vital cohesion. For no purpose could this population be united; they formed a rope of sand. There was the distraction of religion—Jacobites, Nestorians, &c.; there was the distraction of races—slaves and masters, conquered and conquerors, modern intruders mixed, but not blended with, aboriginal mountaineers. Property became the one principle and ground of choice between the two governments. Where was protection to be had for *that*? Barbarous as were the Arabs, they saw their present advantage. Often it would happen from the position of the armies, that *they* could, whilst the emperor could not, guarantee the instant security of land or of personal treasures; the Arabs could also promise, sometimes, even a total immunity from taxes; generally a diminished scale of taxation; always a remission of arrears; none

of which accessions could be listened to by the emperor, partly on account of the public necessities, partly from jealousy of establishing operative precedents. For religion, again, protection was more easily obtained in that day from the Arab, who made war on Christianity, than from the Byzantine emperor, who was its champion. What were the different sects and subdivisions of Christianity to the barbarian? Monophysite, Monothelite, Eutychian, or Jacobite, all were to him as the scholastic disputes of noble and intellectual Europe to the camps of gipsies. The Arab felt himself to be the depositary of one sublime truth, the unity of God. His mission, therefore, was principally against idolaters. Yet even to *them* his policy was to sell toleration of idolatry and Polytheism for tribute. Clearly, as Mr. Finlay hints, this was merely a provisional moderation, meant to be laid aside when sufficient power was obtained; and it was laid aside, in after ages, by many a wretch like Timor or Nadir Shah. Religion, therefore, and property once secured, what more had the Syrians to seek? And if to these advantages for the Saracens we add the fact, that a considerable Arab population was dispersed through Syria, who became so many emissaries, spies, and decoys in the service of their countrymen, it does great honor to the emperor, that through so many campaigns he should at all have maintained his ground; and this at last he resigned only under the despondency caused by almost universal treachery.

The Saracens, therefore, had no great merit even in their earliest exploits; and the *impetus* of their movement forwards, that principle of proselytism which

carried them so strongly “ ahead ” through a few generations, was very soon brought to a stop. Mr. Finlay, in my mind, does right to class these barbarians as “ socially and politically little better than the Gothic, Hunnish, and Avar monarchies.” But, on consideration, the Gothic monarchy embosomed the germs of a noble civilization ; whereas the Saracens have never propagated great principles of any kind, nor attained even a momentary grandeur in their institutions, except where coalescing with a higher or more ancient civilization.

Meantime, ascending from the earliest Mahometans to their prophet, what are we to think of *him*? Was Mahomet a great man? I think not. The case was thus : the Arabian tribes had long stood ready, like dogs held in a leash, for a start after distant game. It was not Mahomet who gave them that impulse. But next, what was it that hindered the Arab tribes from obeying the impulse? Simply this, that they were always in feud with each other ; so that their expeditions, beginning in harmony, were sure to break up in anger on the road. What they needed was some one grand compressing and unifying principle, such as the Roman found in the destinies of his city. True ; but this, you say, they found in the sublime principle that God was one, and had appointed them to be the scourges of all who denied it. Their mission was to cleanse the earth from Polytheism ; and, as ambassadors from God, to tell the nations — “ Ye shall have no other Gods but me.” That was grand ; and *that* surely they had from Mahomet ? Perhaps so ; but where did he get it ? He stole it from the Jewish

Scriptures, and from the Scriptures no less than from the traditions of the Christians. Assuredly, then, the first projecting *impetus* was not impressed upon Islamism by Mahomet. This lay in a revealed truth; and by Mahomet it was furtively translated to his own use from those oracles which held it in keeping. But possibly, if not the *principle* of motion, yet at least the steady conservation of this motion was secured to Islamism by Mahomet. Granting (you will say) that the launch of this religion might be due to an alien inspiration, yet still the steady movement onwards of this religion, through some centuries, might be due exclusively to the code of laws bequeathed by Mahomet in the Koran. And this has been the opinion of many European scholars. They fancy that Mahomet, however worldly and sensual as the founder of a pretended revelation, was wise in the wisdom of this world; and that, if ridiculous as a prophet (which word,* however, did not mean *foreteller*, but simply revealer of truth), he was worthy of veneration as a statesman. He legislated well and presciently, they imagine, for the interests of a remote posterity. Now, upon that question let us hear Mr. Finlay. He, when commenting upon the steady resistance offered to the Saracens

* I have already (viz., in the paper on "Oracles") had occasion to notice the erroneous limitation of the word *Prophecy*, as if it meant only, or chiefly, that revelation which draws away the veil of futurity. But in the great cardinal proposition of Islamism this correction is broadly enunciated — There is one God, and Mahomet is his Prophet. Now, in the narrow sense of prediction, Mahomet disclaimed the gift of prophecy as much as of miracles.

by the African Christians of the seventh and eighth centuries — a resistance which terminated disastrously for both sides -- the poor Christians being exterminated, and the Moslem invaders being robbed of an indigenous working population, naturally inquires what it was that led to so tragical a result. The Christian natives of these provinces were, in a political condition, little favorable to belligerent efforts ; and there cannot be much doubt that, with any wisdom or any forbearance on the part of the intruders, both parties might soon have settled down into a pacific compromise of their feuds. Instead of this, the scimitar was invoked and worshipped as the sole possible arbitrator ; and truce there was none, until the silence of desolation brooded over those once fertile fields. How savage was the fanaticism, and how blind the wordly wisdom, which could have co-operated to such a result ! The cause must have lain in the unaccommodating nature of the Mahometan institutions, in the bigotry of the Mahometan leaders, and in the defect of expansive views on the part of their legislator. He had not provided even for other climates than that of his own sweltering sty in the Hedjas, or for manners more polished, or for institutions more philosophic, than those of his own sun-baked Ishmaelites. "The construction of the political government of the Saracen Empire," says Mr. Finlay, "was imperfect, and shows that Mahomet had neither contemplated extensive foreign conquests, nor devoted the energies of his powerful mind to the consideration of the questions of administration which would arise out of the difficult task of ruling a numerous and wealthy popula

tion, possessed of property, but deprived of equal rights." He then shows how the whole power of the state settled into the hands of a chief priest—systematically irresponsible. When, therefore, that mercenary state of responsibility had passed away from the Mahometans, which was created (like the state of martial law) "by national feelings, military companionship, and exalted enthusiasm," the administration of the caliphs became "far more oppressive than that of the Roman empire." It is in fact an insult to the majestic Romans, if we should place them seriously in the balance with savages like the Saracens. The Romans were essentially the leaders of civilization, according to the possibilities then existing; for their earliest usages and social forms involved a high civilization, whilst promising a higher: whereas all Moslem nations have described a petty arch of national civility—soon reaching its apex, and rapidly barbarizing backwards. This fatal gravitation towards decay and decomposition in Mahometan institutions, which at this day exhibit to the gaze of mankind one uniform spectacle of Mahometan ruins, all the great Moslem nations being already in a *Strulbrug** state, and held erect only by the colossal support of Christian powers, could not, as a *reversion-*

* To any reader who happens to be illiterate, or not extensively informed, it may be proper to explain, that *Strulbrugs* were a creation of Dean Swift. They were people in an imaginary world, who were afraid of dying; and who had the privilege of lingering on through centuries when they ought to have been dead and buried, but suffering all the evils of utter superannuation and decay; having a bare glimmering of semi-consciousness, but otherwise in the condition of mere vegetables.

ary evil, have been healed by the Arabian prophet. His own religious principles would have prevented *that*, for they offer a permanent bounty on sensuality; so that every man who serves a Mahometan state faithfully and brilliantly at twenty-five, is incapacitated at thirty-five for any further service, by the very nature of the rewards which he receives from the state. Within a very few years, every public servant is usually emasculated by that unlimited voluptuousness which equally the Moslem princes and the common Prophet of all Moslems countenance as the proper object, and indeed the sole object, of human pursuit, not on earth only, but in the future of paradise. Here is the mortal ulcer of Islamism, which can never cleanse itself from death and the odor of death. A political ulcer would or might have found restoration for itself; but this ulcer is higher and deeper:—it lies in the religion, which is incapable of reform: it is an ulcer reaching as high as the paradise which Islamism promises, and deep as the hell which it creates. I repeat, that Mahomet could not effectually have neutralized a poison which he himself had introduced into the circulation and life-blood of his Moslem economy. The false prophet was forced to reap as he had sown. But an evil, which is certain, may be retarded; and ravages, which tend finally to confusion may be limited for many generations. Now, in the case of the African provincials which I have noticed, we observe an original incapacity in Islamism, even at its meridian altitude, for amalgamating with any *superior* (and therefore any Christian) culture. And the specific action of Mahometanism in the African case

as contrasted with the Roman economy which it supplanted, is thus exhibited by Mr. Finlay in a most instructive passage, where every negation on the Mahometan side is made to suggest the countervailing *positive* usage on the side of the Romans. O children of Romulus! how noble do you appear, when thus abruptly contrasted with the wild boars that desolated your vineyards! “No local magistrates elected by the people, and no parish priests connected by their feelings and interests both with their superiors and inferiors, bound society together by common ties; and no system of legal administration, independent of the military and financial authorities, preserved the property of the people from the rapacity of the government.”

Such, we are to understand, was *not* the Mahometan system; such *had* been the system of Rome. “Socially and politically,” proceeds the passage, “the Saracen empire was little better than the Gothic, Hunnish, and Avar monarchies; and that it proved more durable, with almost equal oppression, is to be attributed to the powerful enthusiasm of Mahomet’s religion, which tempered for some time its avarice and tyranny.” The same sentiment is repeated still more emphatically at p. 468: — “The political policy of the Saracens was of itself utterly barbarous; and it only caught a passing gleam of justice from the religious feeling of their prophet’s doctrines.”

Thus far, therefore, it appears that Mahometanism is not much indebted to its too famous founder; it owes to him a principle — viz., the unity of God — which, merely through a capital blunder, it fancies p^r•

culiar to itself. Nothing but the grossest ignorance in Mahomet, nothing but the grossest non-acquaintance with Greek authors on the part of the Arabs, could have created or sustained the delusion current amongst that illiterate people — that it was themselves only who rejected Polytheism. Had but one amongst the personal enemies of Mahomet been acquainted with Greek, there was an end of the new religion in the first moon of its existence. Once open the eyes of the Arabs to the fact, that Christians had anticipated them in this great truth of the divine unity, and Mahometanism could only have ranked as a subdivision of Christianity. Mahomet would have ranked only as a Christian heresiarch or schismatic ; such as Nestorius or Marcian at one time, such as Arius or Pelagius at another. In his character of *theologian*, therefore, Mahomet was simply the most memorable of blunderers, supported in his blunders by the most unlettered* of nations. In his other character of *legislator*, we have seen that already the earliest stages of Mahometan experience exposed decisively his ruinous imbecility. Where a rude tribe offered no resistance to his system, for the simple reason that their barbarism suggested no motive for resistance, it could be no honor to prevail. And where, on the other hand, a higher civiliza-

* “*Most unlettered:*”—Viz., at the era of Mahomet. Subsequently, under the encouragement of great caliphs, they became confessedly a learned people. But this cannot disturb the sublime character of their ignorance, at that earliest period when this ignorance was an indispensable co-operating element with the plagiarisms of Mahomet, or the generation of a new religion.

tion had furnished strong points of repulsion to his system, it appears plainly that this pretended apostle of social improvements had devised or hinted no readier mode of conciliation, than by putting to the sword all dissentients. He starts as a theological reformer, with a fancied defiance to the world which was no defiance at all, being exactly what Christians had believed for six centuries, and Jews for six-and-twenty. He starts as a political reformer, with a fancied conciliation to the world, which was no conciliation at all, but was sure to provoke imperishable hostility wheresoever it had any effect at all.

I have thus reviewed some of the more splendid aspects connected with Mr. Finlay's theme; but ^{the} theme, in its entire compass, is worthy of a far ~~long~~ ^{more} extended investigation than my own limits will allow, or than the historical curiosity of the world (misdirected here, as in so many other cases) has hitherto demanded. The Greek race, suffering a long occultation under the blaze of the Roman Empire, into which for a time it had been absorbed, but again emerging from this blaze and re-assuming a distinct Greek agency and influence, offers a subject great by its own inherent attractions, and separately interesting by the unaccountable neglect which it has suffered. To have overlooked this subject, is one amongst the capital oversights of Gibbon. To have rescued it from utter oblivion, and to have traced an outline for its better illumination, is the peculiar merit of Mr. Finlay. His greatest fault is — to have been careless or slovenly in the niceties of classical and philological precision. His greatest praise, and a very great one indeed, is — to have thrown the

light of an *original* philosophic sagacity upon a neglected province of history, indispensable to the *arrondissement* of Paganism in its latest stages, and of anti-Paganism in its earliest.

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PHILOSOPHY OF HERODOTUS.

FEW, even amongst literary people, are aware of the true place occupied by Herodotus in universal literature; secondly, scarce here and there a scholar up and down a century is led to reflect upon the *multiplicity* of his relations to the whole range of civilization. We endeavor in these words to catch, as in a net, the gross prominent faults of his appreciation; on which account, first, we say pointedly, *universal* literature, not Grecian — since the primary error is, to regard Herodotus merely in relation to the literature of Greece; secondly, on which account we notice the circuit, the numerical amount, of his collisions with science — because the second and greater error is, to regard him exclusively as an historian. But now, under a juster allocation of his rank, as the general father of prose composition, Herodotus is nearly related to all literature whatsoever, modern not less than ancient; and as the father of what may be called ethnographical geography, as a man who speculated most ably on all the *humanities* of science — that is, on all the scientific questions which naturally interest our human sensibilities in this great temple which we look up to, the pavilion of the sky, the sun,

he moon, the atmosphere, with its climates and its winds ; or in this home which we inherit, the earth, with its hills and rivers — Herodotus ought least of all to be classed amongst historians : that is but a secondary title for *him* ; he deserves to be rated as the leader amongst philosophical polyphistors, which is the nearest designation to that of encyclopædist current in the Greek literature. And yet is not this word *encyclopædist* much lower than his ancient name — *father of history*? Doubtless it is no great distinction *it present* to be an encyclopædist, which is often but another name for bookmaker, craftsman, mechanic, journeyman, in his meanest degeneration ; yet in those early days, when the timid muse of science had scarcely ventured sandal deep into waters so unfathomable, it seems to us a great thing indeed, that one young man should have founded an entire encyclopædia for his countrymen upon those difficult problems which challenged their primary attention, because starting forward from the very roof — the walls — the floor of that beautiful theatre which they tenanted. The habitable world, *i. οἰκουμένη*, was now daily becoming better known to the human race ; but how ? Chiefly through Herodotus. There are amusing evidences extant, of the profound ignorance in which nations the most enlightened had hitherto lived, as to all lands beyond their own and its frontier adjacencies. But within the single generation (or the single half century) previous to the birth of Herodotus, vast changes had taken place. The mere revolutions consequent upon the foundation of the Persian Empire, had approximated the whole world of civilization. First came the conquest of Egypt by the second o

the new emperors. This event, had it stood alone, was immeasurable in its effects for meeting curiosity, and in its immediate excitement for prompting it. It brought the whole vast chain of Persian dependencies, from the river Indus eastwards to the Nile westwards, or even through Cyrene to the gates of Carthage, under the unity of a single sceptre. The world was open. Jealous interdicts, inhospitable laws, national hostilities, always *in procinctu*, no longer fettered the feet of the merchant, or neutralized the exploring instincts of the philosophic traveller. Next came the restoration of the Jewish people. Judea, no longer weeping by the Euphrates, was again sitting for another half millennium of divine probation under her ancient palm-tree. Next after that came the convulsions of Greece, earthquake upon earthquake ; the trampling myriads of Darius, but six years before the birth of Herodotus ; the river-draining millions of Xerxes in the fifth year of his wandering infancy. Whilst the swell from this great storm was yet angry, and hardly subsiding, (a metaphor used by Herodotus himself, *ἐτι οἰδεόντων πρηγάτων*,) whilst the scars of Greece were yet raw from the Persian scymitar, her towns and temples to the east of the Corinthian isthmus smouldering ruins yet reeking from the Persian torch, the young Herodotus had wandered forth in a rapture of impassioned curiosity, to see, to touch, to measure, all those great objects, whose names had been so recently rife in men's mouths. The luxurious Sardis, the nation of Babylon, the Nile, the oldest of rivers, Memphis, and Thebes the hundred-gated, that were but amongst his youngest daughters, with the pyramids inscrutable as the heavens — all these he

had visited. As far up the Nile as Elephantine, he had *personally* pushed his inquiries; and far beyond *that* by his obstinate questions from all men presumably equal to the answers. Tyre, even, he made a separate voyage to explore. Palestine he had trodden with Grecian feet; the mysterious Jerusalem he had visited, and had computed her proportions. Finally, as to Greece continental, though not otherwise connected with it himself than by the bond of language, and as the home of his Ionian ancestors, (in which view he often calls it by the great moral name of *Hellas*, regions that geographically belong to Asia and even to Africa,) he seems by mere casual notices, now prompted by an historical incident, now for the purpose of an illustrative comparison, to have known so familiarly, that Pausanias in after ages does not describe more minutely the local features to which he had dedicated a life, than this extraordinary traveller, for whom they did but point a period or circumstantiate a parenthesis. As a geographer, often as a hydrographer — witness his soundings thirty miles off the mouths of the Nile — Herodotus was the first great parent of discovery, as between nation and nation he was the author of mutual revelation; whatsoever any one nation knew of its own little ring-fence through daily use and experience, or had received by ancestral tradition, *that* he published to all other nations. He was the first central interpreter, the common dragoman to the general college of civilization that now belted the Mediterranean, holding up, in a language already laying the foundations of universality, one comprehensive mirror, reflecting to them all the separate chorography, habits, institutions

and religious systems of each. Nor was it in the facts merely, that he retraced the portraits of all leading states; whatsoever in these facts was mysterious, for that he had a self-originated solution; whatsoever was perplexing by equiponderant counter-assumptions, for that he brought a determining impulse to the one side or the other; whatsoever seemed contradictory, for that he brought a reconciling hypothesis. Were it the annual rise of a river, were it the formation of a famous kingdom by alluvial depositions, were it the unexpected event of a battle, or the apparently capricious migration of a people — for all alike Herodotus had such resources of knowledge as took the sting out of the marvellous, or such resources of ability as at least suggested the plausible. Antiquities or mythology, martial institutions or pastoral, the secret motives to a falsehood which he exposes, or the hidden nature of some truth which he deciphers — all alike lay within the searching dissection of this astonishing intellect, the most powerful lens by far that has ever been brought to bear upon the mixed objects of a speculative traveller.

To have classed this man as a mere fabling annalist, or even if it should be said on better thoughts — no, not as a fabling annalist, but as a great scenical-historian — is so monstrous an oversight, so mere a neglect of the proportions maintained amongst the topics treated by Herodotus, that we do not conceive any apology requisite for revising, in this place or at this time, the general estimate on a subject *always* interesting. What is everybody's business, the proverb instructs us to view as nobody's by duty; but under the same rule it is *anybody's* by right; and what belongs

to all hours alike, may, for that reason, belong, without blame, to January of the year 1842. Yet, if any man, obstinate in demanding for all acts a ‘sufficient reason,’ [to speak *Leibniticé*] demurs to our revision, as having no special invitation at this immediate moment, then we are happy to tell him that Mr. Hermann Bobrik has furnished us with such an invitation, by a recent review of Herodotus as a geographer,⁸⁷ and thus furnished even a technical plea for calling up the great man before our bar.

We have already said something towards reconsidering the thoughtless classification of a writer whose works do actually, in their major proportion, not essentially concern that subject to which, by their *translated* title, they are exclusively referred; for even that part which *is* historical, often moves by mere anecdotes or personal sketches. And the uniform object of these is not the history, but the political condition of the particular state or province. But we now feel disposed to press this rectification a little more keenly, by asking — What was the reason for this apparently wilful error? The reason is palpable: it was the ignorance of irreflectiveness.

I. — For with respect to the first oversight on the claim of Herodotus, as an earliest archetype of composition, so much is evident — that, if prose were simply the negation of verse, were it the fact that prose had no separate laws of its own, but that, to be a composer in prose meant only his privilege of being inartificial — his dispensation from the restraints of metre — then, indeed, it would be a slight nominal honor to have been the Father of Prose. But this is ignorance, though

pretty common ignorance. To walk well, it is not enough that a man abstains from dancing. Walking has rules of its own, the more difficult to perceive or to practise as they are less broadly *prononcés*. To forbear singing is not, therefore, to speak well or to read well: each of which offices rests upon a separate art of its own. Numerous laws of transition, connection, preparation, are different for a writer in verse and a writer in prose. Each mode of composition is a great art; well executed, is the highest and most difficult of arts. And we are satisfied that, one century before the age of Herodotus, the effort must have been greater to wean the feelings from a key of poetic composition to which all minds had long been attuned and prepared, than at present it would be for any paragraphist in the newspapers to make the inverse revolution by suddenly renouncing the modesty of prose for the impassioned forms of lyrical poetry. It was a great thing to be the leader of prose composition; great even, as we all can see at other times, to be absolutely first in any one subdivision of composition: how much more in one whole bisection of literature! And if it is objected that Herodotus was *not* the eldest of prose writers, doubtless, in an absolute sense, no man was. There must always have been short public inscriptions, not admitting of metre, as where numbers, quantities, dimensions were concerned. It is enough that all feeble tentative explorers of the art had been too meagre in matter, too rude in manner, like Fabius Pictor amongst the Romans, to captivate the ears of men, and thus to ensure their own propagation. Without annoying the reader by the cheap erudition of parading effunct names before him, it is certain that Scylax, an

author still surviving, was nearly contemporary with Herodotus; and not very wide of him by his subject. In *his* case it is probable that the mere practical benefits of his book to the navigators of the Mediterranean in that early period, had multiplied his book so as eventually to preserve it. Yet, as Major Rennell remarks, ‘Geog. Syst. of Herod.,’ p. 610 — ‘Scylax must be regarded as a seaman or pilot, and the author of a coasting directory;’ as a mechanic artisan, ranking with Hamilton, Moore, or Gunter, not as a great liberal artist — an *intellectual* potentate like Herodotus. Such now upon the scale of intellectual claims as was this geographical rival by comparison with Herodotus, such doubtless were his rivals or predecessors in history, in antiquities, and in the other provinces which he occupied. And, generally, the fragments of these authors, surviving in Pagan as well as Christian collections, show that they were such. So that, in a high, virtual sense, Herodotus was to prose composition what Homer, six hundred years earlier, had been to verse.

II.— But whence arose the other mistake about Herodotus — the fancy that his great work was exclusively (or even chiefly) a history? It arose simply from a mistranslation, which subsists everywhere to this day. We remember that Kant, in one of his miscellaneous essays, finding a necessity for explaining the term *Histoire*, [why we cannot say, since the Germans have the self-grown word *Geschichte* for that idea,] deduces it, of course, from the Greek ‘*Iστορία*. This brings him to an occasion for defining the term. And how? It is laughable to imagine the anxious reader bending his ear to catch the Kantean whisper, and

finally solemnly hearing that '*Iστορία* means — History. Really, Professor Kant, we should almost have guessed as much. But such derivations teach no more than the ample circuit of Bardolph's definition — ' *accommodated* — that whereby a man is, or may be thought to be' — what? ' *accommodated*.' Kant was an excellent Latin scholar, but an indifferent Grecian. And spite of the old traditional ' *Historiarum Libri Novem*', which stands upon all Latin title-pages of Herodotus, we need scarcely remind a Greek scholar, that the verb *iστορέω* or the noun *iστορία* never bears, in this writer, the latter sense of recording and memorializing. The substantive is a word frequently employed by Herodotus : often in the plural number ; and uniformly it means *inquiries* or *investigations* ; so that the proper English version of the title-page would be — ' Of the *Researches* made by Herodotus, Nine Books.' And, in reality, that is the very meaning, and the secret drift, the conservation running overhead through these nine sections to the nine muses. Had the work been designed as chiefly historical, it would have been placed under the patronage of the one sole muse presiding over History. But because the very opening sentence tells us 'that it is *not* chiefly historical, that it is so partially, that it rehearses the acts of men, [τὰ γενομένα,] together with the monumental structures of human labor, [τὰ ἔργα] — for the true sense of which word, in this position, see the first sentence in section thirty-five of *Euterpe*, and other things besides, [τά τε ἀλλα,] because, in short not any limited annals, because the mighty revelation of the world to its scattered inhabitants, because —

* *Quicquid agunt homines, votur timor, ira, voluptas,
Gaudia, discursus, nostri est farrago libelli —'*

therefore it was that a running title, or superscription so extensive and so aspiring had at some time been adopted. *Every* muse, and not one only, is presumed to be interested in the work ; and, in simple truth, this legend of dedication is but an expansion of variety more impressively conveyed of what had been already notified in the inaugural sentence ; whilst both this sentence and that dedication were designed to meet the very misconception which has since, notwithstanding, prevailed.⁸⁸

These rectifications ought to have some effect in elevating — first, the rank of Herodotus ; secondly, his present attractions. Most certain we are that few readers are aware of the *various* amusement conveyed from all sources then existing, by this most splendid of travellers. Dr. Johnson has expressed in print, (and not merely in the strife of conversation,) the following extravagant idea — that to Homer, as its original author, may be traced back, at least in outline, *every* tale or complication of incidents, now moving in modern poems, romances or novels. Now, it is not necessary to denounce such an assertion as false, because, upon two separate reasons, it shows itself to be impossible. In the first place, the motive to such an assertion was — to emblazon the inventive faculty of Homer ; but it happens that Homer could not invent anything, small or great, under the very principles of Grecian art. To be a fiction, as to matters of *action*, (for in embellishments the rule might be otherwise,) was to be ridiculous and unmeaning in Grecian eyes. We may illustrate the Grecian feeling on this point (however little known to critics) by our own dolorous disappointment when we opened the

Alhambra of Mr. Washington Irving. We had supposed it to be some real Spanish or Moorish legend connected with that romantic edifice ; and, behold ! it was a mere Sadler's Wells travesty, (we speak of its plan, not of its execution,) applied to some slender fragments from past days. Such, but far stronger would have been the disappointment to Grecian feelings, in finding any poetic (*à fortiori*, any prose) legend to be a fiction of the writers — words cannot measure the reaction of disgust. And thence it was that no tragic poet of Athens ever took for his theme any tale or fable not already pre-existing in *some* version, though now and then it might be the least popular version. It was *capital* as an offence of the intellect, it was lunatic to do otherwise. This is a most important characteristic of ancient taste ; and most interesting in its philosophic value for any comparative estimate of modern art, as against ancient. In particular, no just commentary can ever be written on the poetics of Aristotle, which leaves it out of sight. Secondly, it is evident that the whole character, the very principle of movement, in many modern stories, depends upon sentiments derived remotely from Christianity ; and others upon usages or manners peculiar to modern civilization ; so as in either case to involve a moral anachronism if viewed as Pagan. Not the coloring only of the fable, but the very incidents, one and all, and the situations, and the perplexities, are constantly the product of something characteristically modern in the circumstances, sometimes, for instance, in the climate ; *for the ancients had no experimental knowledge of severe climates.* With these double impossibilities before us, of any absolute fictions in a Pagan

uthor that could be generally fitted to anticipate modern tales, we shall not transfer to Herodotus the impracticable compliment paid by Dr. Johnson to Homer. But it is certain that the very best collection of stories furnished by Pagan funds, lies dispersed through his great work. One of the best of the *Arabian Nights*, the very best as regards the structure of the plot—viz., the tale of *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*—is evidently derived from an incident in that remarkable Egyptian legend, connected with the treasury-house of Rhampsinitus. This, except two of his Persian legends, (Cyrus and Darius,) is the longest tale in Herodotus, and by much the best in an artist's sense; indeed, its own remarkable merit, as a fable in which the incidents *successfully generate each other*, caused it to be transplanted by the Greeks to their own country. Vossius, in his work on the Greek historians, and a hundred years later, Valckenaer, with many other scholars, had pointed out the singular conformity of this memorable Egyptian story with several that afterwards circulated in Greece. The eldest of these transfers was undoubtedly the Bœotian tale (but in days before the name Bœotia existed) of Agamedes and Trophonius, architects, and sons to the King of Orchomenos, who built a treasure-house at Hyria. (noticed by Homer in his ship catalogue,) followed by tragical circumstances, the very same as those recorded by Herodotus. It is true that the latter incidents, according to the Egyptian version—the monstrous device of Rhampsinitus for discovering the robber at the price of his daughter's honor, and the final reward of the robber for his petty ingenuity, (which after all, belonged chiefly to the deceased architect,

ruin the tale as a whole. But these latter incidents are obviously forgeries of another age; '*angeschlossen*' fastened on by fraud, '*an den eisten aelteren theil*,' to the first and elder part, as Mueller rightly observes, p. 97, of his *Orchomenos*. And even here it is pleasing to notice the incredulity of Herodotus, who was not, like so many of his Christian commentators, sceptical upon previous system and by wholesale, but equally prone to believe wherever his heart (naturally reverential) suggested an interference of superior natures, and to doubt wherever his excellent judgment detected marks of incoherency. He records the entire series of incidents as $\tau\alpha\lambda\epsilon\gamma\omega\mu\epsilon\iota\alpha\delta\kappa\omega\eta$, reports of events which had reached him by hearsay, $\epsilon\mu\omega\delta\epsilon\omega\pi\iota\sigma\tau\alpha$ — 'but to me,' he says pointedly, 'not credible.'

In this view, as a *thesaurus fabularum*, a great repository of anecdotes and legends, tragic or romantic, Herodotus is so far beyond all Pagan competition, that we are thrown upon Christian literatures for any corresponding form of merit. The case has often been imagined playfully, that a man were restricted to one book; and, supposing all books so solemn as those of a religious interest to be laid out of the question, many are the answers which have been pronounced, according to the difference of men's minds. Rousseau, as is well known, on such an assumption made his election for Plutarch. But shall we tell the reader *why?* It was not altogether his taste, or his judicious choice, which decided him; for choice there can be none amongst elements unexamined — it was his limited reading. Except a few papers in the French *Encyclopédia* during his maturer years, and some dozen of works presented to him by their authors, his

own friends, Rousseau had read little or nothing beyond Plutarch's Lives in a bad French translation, and Montaigne. Though not a Frenchman, having had an education (if such one can call it) thoroughly French, he had the usual puerile French craze about Roman virtue, and republican simplicity, and Cato, and 'all that.' So that *his* decision goes for little. And even he, had he read Herodotus, would have thought twice before he made up his mind. The truth is, that in such a case, suppose, for example, Robinson Crusoe empowered to import one book and no more into his insular hermitage, the most powerful of human books must be unavoidably excluded, and for the following reason: that in the direct ratio of its profundity will be the unity of any fictitious interest; a *Paradise Lost*, or a *King Lear*, could not agitate or possess the mind that they do, if they were at leisure to 'amuse' us. So far from relying on its unity, the work which should aim at the *maximum* of amusement, ought to rely on the *maximum* of variety. And in that view it is that we urge the paramount pretensions of Herodotus: since not only are his topics separately of primary interest, each for itself, but they are collectively the most varied in the quality of that interest, and they are touched with the most flying and least lingering pen; for, of all writers, Herodotus is the most cautious not to trespass on his reader's patience: his transitions are the most fluent whilst they are the most endless, justifying themselves to the understanding as much as they recommend themselves to the spirit of hurrying curiosity; and his narrations or descriptions are the most animated by the generality of their abstractions whilst they are the most faithfully individual by the felicity of their minute circumstances.

Once, and in a public situation, we ourselves denominated Herodotus the Froissart of antiquity. But we were then speaking of him exclusively as an historian; and even so, we did him injustice. Thus far it is true the two men agree, that both are less political, or reflecting, or moralizing, as historians, than they are scenical and splendidly picturesque. But Froissart is little else than an historian. Whereas Herodotus is the counterpart of some ideal Pandora, by the universality of his accomplishments. He is a traveller of discovery, like Captain Cook or Park. He is a naturalist, the earliest that existed. He is a mythologist, and a speculator on the origin, as well as value, of religious rites. He is a political economist by instinct of genius, before the science of economy had a name or a conscious function; and by two great records, he has put us up to the level of *all* that can excite our curiosity at that great era of moving civilization:—first, as respects Persia, by the elaborate review of the various satrapies or great lieutenancies of the empire—that vast empire which had absorbed the Assyrian, Median, Babylonian, Little Syrian, and Egyptian kingdoms, registering against each separate viceroyalty, from Algiers to Lahore beyond the Indus, what was the amount of its annual tribute to the gorgeous exchequer of Susa; and secondly, as respects Greece, by his review of the numerous little Grecian states, and their several contingents in ships, or in soldiers, or in both, (according as their position happened to be inland or maritime,) towards the universal armament against the second and greatest of the Persian invasions. Two such documents, such archives of political economy, do not exist elsewhere.

in history. Egypt had now ceased, and we may say that (according to the Scriptural prophecy) it had ceased forever to be an independent realm. Persia had now for seventy years had her foot upon the neck of this unhappy land ; and, in one century beyond the death of Herodotus, the two-horned he-goat⁸⁹ of Macedonia was destined to butt it down into hopeless prostration. But so far as Egypt, from her vast antiquity, or from her great resources, was entitled to a more circumstantial notice than any other satrapy of the great empire, such a notice it has ; and we do not scruple to say, though it may seem a bold word, that, from the many scattered features of Egyptian habits or usages incidentally indicated by Herodotus, a better portrait of Egyptian life, and a better abstract of Egyptian political economy, might even yet be gathered, than from all the writers of Greece for the cities of their native land.

But take him as an exploratory traveller and as a naturalist, who had to break ground for the earliest entrenchments in these new functions of knowledge ; we do not scruple to say that *mutatis mutandis*, and *concessis concedendis*, Herodotus has the separate qualifications of the two men whom we would select by preference as the most distinguished amongst Christian traveller-naturalists ; he has the universality of the Prussian Humboldt ; and he has the picturesque fidelity to nature of the English Dampier — of whom the last was a simple self-educated seaman, but strong-minded by nature, austerey accurate through his moral reverence for truth, and zealous in pursuit of knowledge, to an excess which raises him to a level with the noble Greek. Dampier, wher in the las

stage of exhaustion from a malignant dysentery, unable to stand upright, and surrounded by perils in a land of infidel fanatics, crawled on his hands and feet to verify some fact of natural history, under the blazing forenoon of the tropics ; and Herodotus, having no motive but his own inexhaustible thirst of knowledge, embarked on a separate voyage, fraught with hardships, towards a chance of clearing up what seemed a difficulty of some importance in deducing the religious mythology of his country.

But it is in those characters by which he is best known to the world — viz., as an historian and a geographer — that Herodotus levies the heaviest tribute on our reverence ; and precisely in those characters it is that he now claims the amplest atonement, having formerly sustained the grossest outrages of insult and slander on the peculiar merits attached to each of those characters. Credulous he was supposed to be, in a degree transcending the privilege of old garrulous nurses ; hyperbolically extravagant beyond Sir John Mandeville ; and lastly, as if he had been a Mendez Pinto or a Munchausen, he was saluted as the ‘father of lies.’⁴⁰ Now, on these calumnies, it is pleasant to know that his most fervent admirer no longer feels it requisite to utter one word in the way of complaint or vindication. Time has carried him round to the diametrical counterpole of estimation. Examination and more learned study have justified every iota of those statements *to which he pledged his own private authority*. His chronology is better to this day than any single system opposed to it. His dimensions and distances are so far superior to those of later travellers, whose hands were strengthened by

all the powers of military command and regal autocracy, that Major Rennell, upon a deliberate retrospect of his works, preferred his authority to that of those who came after him as conquerors and rulers of the kingdoms which he had described as a simple traveller; nay, to the late authority of those who had conquered those conquerors. It is gratifying that a judge, so just and thoughtful as the Major, should declare the reports of Alexander's officers on the distances and stations in the Asiatic part of his empire, less trustworthy by much than the reports of Herodotus: yet, who was more liberally devoted to science than Alexander? or what were the humble powers of the foot traveller in comparison with those of the mighty earth-shaker, for whom prophecy had been on the watch for centuries? It is gratifying, that a judge like the Major should find the same advantage on the side of Herodotus, as to the distances in the Egyptian and Libyan part of this empire, on a comparison with the most accomplished of Romans, Pliny, Strabo, Ptolemy, (for all are Romans who benefitted by any Roman machinery,) coming five and six centuries later. We indeed hold the accuracy of Herodotus to be all but marvellous, considering the wretched apparatus which he could then command in the popular measures. The *stadium*, it is true, was more accurate, because less equivocal in those Grecian days, than afterwards, when it inter-oscillated with the Roman *stadium*; but all the multiples of that stadium, such as the *schænus*, the Persian *parasang*, or the military *stathmus*, were only less vague than the *coss* of Hindostan in their ideal standards, and as fluctuating *practically* as are all computed distances at al.

times and places. The close approximations of Herodotus to the returns of distances upon caravan routes of five hundred miles by the most vigilant of modern travellers, checked by the caravan controllers, is a bitter retort upon his calumniators. And, as to the consummation of the insults against him in the charge of wilful falsehood, we explain it out of hasty reading and slight acquaintance with Greek. The sensibility of Herodotus to his own future character in this respect, under a deep consciousness of his upright forbearance on the one side, and of the extreme liability on the other side to uncharitable construction for any man moving amongst Egyptian thaumaturgical traditions, comes forward continually in his anxious distinctions between what he gives on his own ocular experience (*oψις*) — what upon his own inquiries, or combination of inquiries with previous knowledge (*ἱστορία*) — what upon hearsay (*ἀκοή*) — what upon current tradition (*λόγος*). And the evidences are multiplied over and above these distinctions, of the irritation which besieged his mind as to the future wrongs he might sustain from the careless and the unprincipled. Had truth been less precious in his eyes, was it tolerable to be supposed a liar for so vulgar an object as that of creating a stare by wonder-making? The high-minded Grecian, justly proud of his superb intellectual resources for taking captive the imaginations of his half-polished countrymen, disdained such base artifices, which belong more properly to an effeminate and over-stimulated stage of civilization. And, once for all, he had announced at an early point as the *principle* of his work, as what ran along the whole line of his statements by way of basis or

subsumption, ($\pi\alpha\rho\grave{\alpha} \pi\acute{a}\nu\tau\alpha \tau\grave{o}\nu \lambda\acute{o}\gamma\sigma \dot{\nu}\pi\kappa\epsilon\tau\alpha i$) — that he wrote upon the faith of hearsay from the Egyptians severally : meaning by ‘ severally,’ ($\epsilon\kappa\alpha\sigma\tau\hat{\omega}\nu$) — that he did not adopt any chance hearsay, but such as was guarantied by the men who presided over each several department of Egyptian official or ceremonial life.

Having thus said something towards re-vindicating for Herodotus his proper station — first, as a *power* in literature ; next, as a geographer, economist, mythologist, antiquary, historian — we shall draw the reader’s attention to the remarkable ‘ set of the current’ towards that very consummation and result of justice amongst the learned within the last two generations. There is no such case extant of truth slowly righting itself. Seventy years ago, the reputation of Herodotus for veracity was at the lowest ebb. That prejudice still survives popularly. But amongst the learned, it has gradually given way to better scholarship, and to two generations of travellers, starting with far superior preparation for their difficult labors. Accordingly, at this day, each successive commentator, better able to read Greek, and better provided with solutions for the inevitable errors of a *reporter*, drawing upon others for his facts, with only an occasional interposition of his own opinion, comes with increasing reverence to his author. The *laudator temporis acti* takes for granted in his sweeping ignorance, that we of the present generation are less learned than our immediate predecessors. It happens, that all over Europe the course of learning has been precisely in the inverse direction. Poor was the condition of Greek learning in England, when Dr. Cooke (one of the five wretched old boys who operated upon Gray’s *Elegy* in the

character of Greek translators) presided at Cambridge as their Greek professor. See, or rather touch with the tongs, his edition⁹¹ of Aristotle's *Poetics*. Equally poor was its condition in Germany; for, if one swallow could make a summer, we had that in England. Poorer by far was its condition (as generally it is) in France: where a great Don in Greek letters, an Abbé who passed for unfathomably learned, having occasion to translate a Greek sentence, saying that 'Herodotus, even whilst Ionicizing, (using the Ionic dialect,) had yet spelt a particular name with the *alpha* and not with the *eta*,' rendered the passage 'Herodote et aussi Jazon.' The Greek words were these three— 'Ἡρόδοτος καὶ ἴαζων.* He had never heard that *καὶ* means *even* almost as often as it means *and*: thus he introduced to the world, a fine new author, one Jazon, Esquire; and the squire holds his place in the learned Abbé's book to this day. Good Greek scholars are now in the proportion of perhaps sixty to one by comparison with the penultimate generation; and this proportion holds equally for Germany and for England. So that the restoration of Herodotus to his place in literature, his *Palingenesia*, has been no caprice, but is due to the vast depositions of knowledge, equal for the last seventy or eighty years to the accumulated product of the entire previous interval from Herodotus to 1760, in every one of those particular fields which this author was led by his situation to cultivate.

Meantime the work of cleansing this great tank or depository of archaeology (the one sole reservoir, so placed in point of time as to collect and draw all the contributions from the frontier ground between the

* Herodotus even whilst Ionicizing.

mythical and the *historical* period) is still proceeding. Every fresh laborer, by new accessions of direct aid, or by new combinations of old suggestions, finds himself able to purify the interpretation of Herodotus by wider analogies, or to account for his mistakes by more accurately developing the situation of the speaker. We also bring our own unborrowed contributions. We also would wish to promote this great labor, which, be it remembered, concerns no secondary section of human progress, searches no blind corners or nooks of history, but traverses the very crests and summits of human annals, with a solitary exception for the Hebrew Scriptures, so far as opening civilization is concerned. The commencement — the solemn inauguration — of history, is placed no doubt in the commencement of the Olympiads, 777 years before Christ. The doors of the great theatre were then thrown open. That is undeniable. But the performance did not actually commence till 555 B. C., (the *locus* of Cyrus.) Then began the great tumult of nations — the *termashaw*, to speak *Bengalicé*. Then began the procession, the pomp, the interweaving of the western tribes, not always by bodily presence, but by the *actio in distans* of politics. And the birth of Herodotus was precisely in the seventy-first year from that period. It is the greatest of periods that is concerned. And we also as willingly, we repeat, would offer our contingent. What we propose to do, is to bring forward two or three important suggestions of others not yet popularly known — shaping and pointing, if possible, their application — brightening their justice, or strengthening their outlines. And with these we propose to intermingle one or two suggestions, more exclusively our own.

I.—*The Non-Planetary Earth of Herodotus in its relation to the Planetary Sun.*

Mr. Hermann Bobrik is the first torch-bearer to Herodotus, who has thrown a strong light on his theory of the earth's relation to the solar system. This is one of the *præcognita*, literally indispensable to the comprehension of the geographical basis assumed by Herodotus. And it is really interesting to see how one original error had drawn after it a train of others — how one restoration of light has now illuminated a whole hemisphere of objects. We suppose it the very next thing to a fatal impossibility, that any man should at once rid his mind so profoundly of all natural biases from education, or almost from human instinct, as barely to suspect the physical theory of Herodotus — barely to imagine the idea of a divorce occurring in *any* theory between the solar orb and the great phenomena of summer and winter. Prejudications, having the force of a necessity, had blinded generation after generation of students to the very admission *in limine* of such a theory as could go the length of de-throning the sun himself from all influence over the great vicissitudes of heat and cold — seed-time and harvest — for man. They did not see what actually *was*, what lay broadly below their eyes, in Herodotus, because it seemed too fantastic a dream to suppose that it *could* be. The case is far more common than feeble psychologists imagine. Numerous are the instances in which we actually see — not that which *is* really there to be seen — but that which we believe *a priori* ought to be there. And in cases so palpable as that of an external sense, it is not difficult to set the

student on his guard. But in cases more intellectual or moral, like several in Herodotus, it is difficult for the teacher himself to be effectually vigilant. It was not anything actually seen by Herodotus which led him into denying the solar functions ; it was his own independent speculation. This suggested to him a plausible hypothesis ; plausible it was for that age of the world ; and afterwards, on applying it to the actual difficulties of the case, this hypothesis seemed so far good, that it did really unlock them. The case stood thus : — Herodotus contemplated Cold not as a mere privation of Heat, but as a positive quality ; quite as much entitled to ‘high consideration,’ in the language of ambassadors, as its rival heat ; and quite as much to a ‘retiring pension,’ in case of being superannuated. Thus we all know, from Addison’s fine raillery, that a certain philosopher regarded darkness not at all as any result from the absence of light, but fancied that, as some heavenly bodies are luminaries, so others (which he called *tenebrific stars*) might have the office of ‘raying out positive darkness.’ In the infancy of science, the idea is natural to the human mind ; and we remember hearing a great man of our own times declare, that no sense of conscious power had ever so vividly dilated his mind, nothing so like a revelation, as when one day in broad sunshine, whilst yet a child, he discovered that his own shadow, which he had often angrily hunted, was no real existence, but a mere *hindering* of the sun’s light from filling up the space screened by his own body. The old grudge, which he cherished against this coy fugitive shadow, melted away in the rapture of this great discovery. To him the discovery had doubtless been originally half-sug-

gested by explanations of his elders imperfectly comprehended. But in itself the distinction between the *affirmative* and the *negative* is a step perhaps the most costly in *effort* of any that the human mind is summoned to take ; and the greatest indulgence is due to those early stages of civilization when this step had *not* been taken. For Herodotus, there existed two great counter-forces in absolute hostility — heat and cold ; and these forces were incarnated in the WINDS. It was the north and north-east wind, not any distance of the sun, which radiated cold and frost ; it was the southern wind from Ethiopia, not at all the sun, which radiated heat. But could a man so sagacious as Herodotus stand with his ample Grecian forehead exposed to the noonday sun, and suspect no part of the calorific agency to be seated in the sun ? Certainly he could not. But this partial agency is no more than what we of this day allow to secondary or tertiary causes apart from the principal. We, that regard the sun as upon the whole our planetary fountain of light, yet recognize an electrical *aurora*, a zodiacal light, &c., as substitutes not palpably dependent. We that regard the sun as upon the whole our fountain of heat, yet recognize many co-operative, many modifying forces having the same office — such as the local configuration of ground — such as sea neighborhoods or land neighborhoods, marshes or none, forests or none, strata of soil fitted to retain heat and fund it, or to disperse it and cool it. Precisely in the same way Herodotus did allow an agency to the sun upon the *daily* range of heat, though he allowed none to the same luminary in regulating the *annual* range. What caused the spring and autumn, the summer and winter, (though generally

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In those ages there were but two seasons recognized,) was the action of the winds. The diurnal arch of heat (as we may call it) ascending from sunrise to some hour, (say two P. M.,) when the sum of the two heats (the funded annual heat and the fresh increments of *daily* heat) reaches its *maximum*, and the descending limb of the same arch from this hour to sunset — this he explained entirely out of the sun's *daily* revolution, which to him was, of course, no apparent motion, but a real one in the sun. It is truly amusing to hear the great man's infantine simplicity in describing the effects of the solar journey. The sun rises, it seems, in India ;⁹² and these poor Indians, roasted by whole nations at breakfast-time, are then up to their chins in water, whilst we thankless Westerns are taking ' tea and toast' at our ease. However, it is a long lane which has no turning ; and by noon the sun has driven so many stages away from India, that the poor creatures begin to come out of their rivers, and really find things tolerably comfortable. India is now cooled down to a balmy Grecian temperature. ' All right behind ! ' as the mail-coach guards observe ; but not quite right ahead, when the sun is racing away over the boiling brains of the Ethiopians, Libyans, &c., and driving Jupiter-Ammon perfectly distracted with his furnace. But when things are at the worst, the proverb assures us that they will mend. And for an early five o'clock dinner, Ethiopia finds that she has no great reason to complain. All civilized people are now cool and happy for the rest of the day. But, as to the woolly-headed rascals on the west coast of Africa, they catch it' towards sunset, and ' no mistake.' Yet why trouble our heads about inconsiderable black fellows ?

like them, who have been cool all day whilst better men were melting away by pailfuls? And such is the history of a summer's day in the heavens above and on the earth beneath. As to little Greece, she is but skirted by the sun, who keeps away far to the south; thus she is maintained in a charming state of equilibrium by her fortunate position on the very frontier line of the fierce *Boreas* and the too voluptuous *Notos*.

Meantime one effect follows from this transfer of the solar functions to the winds, which has not been remarked, — viz. that Herodotus has a double north; one governed by the old noisy *Boreas*, another by the silent constellation *Arktos*. And the consequence of this fluctuating north, as might be guessed, is the want of any true north at all; for the two points of the wind and the constellation do not coincide in the first place; and secondly, the wind does not coincide with itself, but naturally traverses through a few points right and left. Next, the east also will be indeterminate from a different cause. Had Herodotus lived in a high northern latitude, there is no doubt that the ample range of difference between the northerly points of rising in the summer and the southerly in winter, would have forced his attention upon the fact, that only at the equinox, vernal or autumnal, does the sun's rising accurately coincide with the east. But in his Ionian climate, the deflections either way, to the north or to the south, were too inconsiderable to *force* themselves upon the eye; and thus a more indeterminate east would arise — never rigorously corrected, because requiring so moderate a correction. Now, a vague unsettled east, would support a vague unsettled north. And of course, through whatever arch of variations either of these

points vibrated, precisely upon that scale the west and the south would follow them.

Thus arises, upon a simple and easy genesis, that condition of the compass (to use the word by anticipation) which must have tended to confuse the geographical system of Herodotus, and which does, in fact, account for the else unaccountable obscurities in some of its leading features. These anomalous features would, on their own account, have deserved notice ; but now, after this explanation, they will have a separate value of illustrated proofs in relation to the present article, No. I.

II.—*The Danube of Herodotus considered as a counterpole to the Nile.*

There is nothing more perplexing to some of the many commentators on Herodotus than all which he says of the river Danube ; nor anything easier, under the preparation of the preceding article. The Danube, or, in the nomenclature of Herodotus, the *Istros*, is described as being in all respects *ἐν παραλλήλοις*, by which we must understand corresponding rigorously, but antistrophically, (as the Greeks express it,) similar angles, similar dimensions, but in an inverse order, to the Egyptian Nile. The Nile, in its monstrous section, flows from south to north. Consequently the Danube, by the rule of *parallelism*, ought to flow through a corresponding section from north to south. But, say the commentators, it does *not*. Now, verbally they might seem wrong ; but substantially, as regards the justification of Herodotus, they are right. Our business however, is not to justify Herodotus, but to explain him. Undoubtedly there is a point about one hundred and

fifty miles east of Vienna, where the Danube descends almost due south for a space of three hundred miles; and this is a very memorable reach of the river; for somewhere within that long corridor of land which lies between itself, (this Danube section,) and a direct parallel section equally long, of the Hungarian river Theiss, once lay, in the fifth century, the royal city or encampment of Attila. Gibbon placed the city in the northern part of this corridor, (or, strictly speaking, this Mesopotamia,) consequently about two hundred miles to the east of Vienna: but others, and especially Hungarian writers, better acquainted by personal examination with the ground, remove it to one hundred and fifty miles more to the south—that is, to the centre of the corridor, (or gallery of land enclosed by the two rivers.) Now, undoubtedly, except along the margin of this Attila's corridor, there is no considerable section of the Danube which flows southward; and this will not answer the postulates of Herodotus. Generally speaking, the Danube holds a headlong course to the east. Undoubtedly this must be granted; and so far it might seem hopeless to seek for that kind of parallelism to the Nile which Herodotus asserts. But the question for us does not concern what *is* or then *was*—the question is solely about what Herodotus can be shown to have meant. And here comes in, seasonably and serviceably, that vagueness as to the points of the compass which we have explained in the preceding article. This, connected with the positive assertion of Herodotus as to an inverse correspondency with the Nile, (north and south, therefore, as the antistrophe to south and north,) would place beyond a doubt the creed of Herodotus — which is the question that concerns

us. And, *vice versa*, this creed of Herodotus as to the course of the Danube, in its main latter section when approaching the Euxine Sea, re-acts to confirm all we have said, *proprio marte*, on the indeterminate articulation of the Ionian compass then current. Here we have at once the *à priori* reasons making it probable that Herodotus would have a vagrant compass; secondly, many separate instances confirming this probability; thirdly, the particular instance of the Danube, as antistrophizing with the Nile, not reconcilable with any other principle; and fourthly, the following independent demonstration, that the Ionian compass must have been confused in its leading divisions. Mark, reader, Herodotus terminates his account of the Danube and its course, by affirming that this mighty river enters the Euxine — at what point? Opposite, says he, to Sinope. Could that have been imagined? Sinope, being a Greek settlement in a region where such settlements were rare, was notorious to all the world as the flourishing emporium, on the south shore of the Black Sea, of a civilized people, literally *hustled* by barbarians. Consequently — and this is a point to which all commentators alike are blind — the Danube descends upon the Euxine in a long line running due south. Else, we demand, how could it antistrophize with the Nile? Else, we demand, how could it lie right over against the Sinope? Else, we demand, how could it make that right-angle bend to the west in the earlier section of its course, which is presupposed in its perfect analogy to the Nile of Herodotus? If already it were lying east and west in that lower part of its course which approaches the Euxine, what occasion could it offer for a right-angle turn, or for any turn at all —

what possibility for any *angle* whatever between this lower reach and that superior reach so confessedly running eastward, according to *all* accounts of its derivation?

For as respects the Nile, by way of close to this article, it remains to inform the reader—that Herodotus had evidently met in Upper Egypt slaves or captives in war from the regions of Soudon, Tombuctoo, &c. This is the opinion of Rennell, of Browne, the visiter of the Ammonian Oasis, and many other principal authorities; and for a *reason* which we always regard with more respect, though it were the weakest of reasons, than all the authorities of this world clubbed together. And this reason was the coincidence of what Herodotus reports, with the truth of facts first ascertained thousands of years later. These slaves, or some people from those quarters, had told him of a vast river lying east and west, of course the Niger, but (as he and they supposed) a superior section of the Nile; and therefore, by geometrical necessity, falling at right angles upon that other section of the Nile, so familiar to himself, lying south and north. Hence arose a faith that is not primarily hence, but hence in combination with a previous construction existing in his mind for the geometry of the Danube, that the two rivers Danube and Nile had a mystic relation as arctic and antarctic powers over man. Herodotus had been taught to figure the Danube as a stream of two main inclinations—an upper section rising in the extreme west of Europe, (possibly in Charlotte Square, Edinburgh,) whence he travelled with the arrow's flight due east in search of his wife the Euxine; but somewhere in the middle of his

course, hearing that her dwelling lay far to the south, and having then completed his distance in longitude, afterwards he ran down his latitude with the headlong precipitation of a lover, and surprised the bride due north from Sinope. This construction it was of the Danube's course which subsequently, upon his hearing of a corresponding western limb for the Nile, led him to perceive the completion of that analogy between the two rivers, its absolute perfection, which already he had partially suspected. Their very figurations now appeared to reflect and repeat each other in solemn mimicry, as previously he had discovered the mimical correspondence of their functions; for this latter doctrine had been revealed to him by the Egyptian priests, then the chief depositaries of Egyptian learning. They had informed him, and evidently had persuaded him, that already more than once the sun had gone round to the region of Europe; pursuing his diurnal arch as far to the north of Greece as now he did to the south; and carrying in his equipage all the changes of every kind which were required to make Scythia an Egypt, and consequently to make the Istros a Nile. The same annual swelling then filled the channel of the Danube, which at present gladdens the Nile. The same luxuriance of vegetation succeeded as a dowry to the gay summer-land of Trans-Euxine and Para-Danubian Europe, which for thousands of years had seemed the peculiar heirloom of Egypt. Old Boreas — we are glad of that — was required to pack up ‘his alls,’ and be off; his new business was to plague the black rascals, and to bake them with hoar-frost; which must have caused them to shake their ears in some astonishment for a few

centuries, until they got used to it. Whereas ‘the sweet south wind’ of the ancient mariner, leaving Africa, pursued ‘the mariner’s holloa, all over the Euxine and the *Palus Mæotis*. The Danube, in short, became the Nile; and the same deadly curiosity haunted its fountains. So that many a long-legged Bruce would strike off in those days towards Charlotte Square. But all in vain: ‘Nec licuit populis’ — or stop, to save the metre —

‘Nec poteras, Charlotte, populis tum parva videri.’

Nobody would reach the fountains; particularly as there would be another arm, El-Abiad or white river, perhaps at Stockbridge. However, the explorers must have ‘burned’ strongly (as children say at hide-and-seek) when they attained a point so near to the fountains as *Blackwood’s Magazine*, which doubtless was going on pretty well in those days.

We are sorry that Herodotus should have been so vague and uncircumstantial in his account of these vicissitudes; since it is pretty evident to any man who reflects on the case — that, had he pursued the train of changes inevitable to Egypt under the one single revolution affecting the Nile itself as a slime-depositing river, his judicious intellect would soon have described the obliteration of the whole Egyptian valley, [elsewhere he himself calls that valley *δωρον του Νείλου* — a gift of the Nile,] consequently the obliteration of the people, consequently the immemorial extinction of all those records — or, if they were posterior to the last revolution in favor of Egypt, at any rate of the one record — which could have transmitted the memory of such an astonishing transfer. Meantime the reader is

now in possession of the whole theory contemplated by Herodotus. It was no mere *lusus naturæ* that the one river repeated the other, and, as it were, mocked the other in form and geographical relations. It was no joke that lurked under that mask of resemblance. Each *was* the other alternately. It was the case of Castor and Pollux, one brother rising as the other set. The Danube could always comfort himself with the idea -- that he was the Nile 'elect ;' the other, or provisional Nile, only 'continuing to hold the seals until his successor should be installed in office.' The Nile, in fact, appears to have the best of it in our time ; but then there is 'a braw time coming,' and after all, swelling as he is with annual conceit, Father Nile, in parliamentary phrase, is but the 'warming-pan' for the Danube ; keeping the office warm for him. A new administration is formed, and out he goes bag and baggage.

It is less important, however, for us, though far more so for the two rivers, to speculate on the reversion of their final prospects, than upon the present symbols of this reversion in the unity of their forms. That is, it less concerns us to deduce the harmony of their functions from the harmony of their geographical courses, than to abide by the inverse argument — that, where the former harmony was so loudly inferred from the latter, at any rate, that fact will demonstrate the existence of the latter harmony in the judgment and faith of Herodotus. He could not possibly have insisted on the analogy between the two channels geographically, as good in logic for authenticating a secret and prophetic analogy between their alternating offices, but that at least he must firmly have believed

In the first of these analogies — as already existing and open to the verification of the human eye. The second or ulterior analogy might be false, and yet affect only its own separate credit, whilst the falsehood of the first was ruinous to the credit of both. Whence it is evident that of the two resemblances in form and function, the resemblance in form was the least disputable of the two for Herodotus.

This argument, and the others which we have indicated, and amongst those others, above all, the position of the Danube's mouths right over against a city situated as was Sinope, — *i. e.* not doubtfully emerging from either flank of the Euxine, west or east, but broadly and almost centrally planted on the southern basis of that sea, — we offer as a body of demonstrative proof, that, to the mature faith of Herodotus, the Danube or Istros ran north and south in its Euxine section, and that its right-angled section ran west and east — a very important element towards the true Europe of Herodotus, which, as we contend, has not yet been justly conceived or figured by his geographical commentators.

III.—*On the Africa of Herodotus.*

There is an amusing blunder on this subject committed by Major Rennell. How often do we hear people commenting on the Scriptures, and raising up néréal edifices of argument, in which every iota of the logic rests, unconsciously to themselves, upon the accidental words of the English version, and melts away when applied to the original text ; so that, in fact, the whole has no more strength than if it were built upon a dun or an *équivoque*. Such is the blunder of the

excellent Major. And it is not timidly expressed. At p. 410, *Geog. Hist. of Herodotus*, he thus delivers himself: — ‘Although the term Lybia’ (so thus does Rennell always spell it, instead of *Libya*) ‘is occasionally used by Herodotus as synonymous to Africa, (especially in *Melpom.*, &c. &c.) yet it is almost exclusively applied to that part bordering on the Mediterranean Sea between the Greater Syrtis and Egypt;’ and he concludes the paragraph thus: — ‘So that Africa, and not Lybia, is the term generally employed by Herodotus.’ We stared on reading these words, as Aladdin stared when he found his palace missing, and the old thief, who had bought his lamp, trotting off with it on his back far beyond the bills of mortality. Naturally we concluded that it was ourselves who must be dreaming, and not the Major; so, taking a bed-candle, off we marched to bed. But the next morning, air clear and frosty, ourselves as sagacious as a greyhound, we pounced at first sight on the self-same words. Thus, after all, it was the conceit mantling in our brain (of being in that instance a cut above the Major) which turned out to be the sober truth; and our modesty, our sobriety of mind, it was which turned out a windy tympany. Certainly, said we, if this be so, and that the word Africa is really standing in Herodotus, then it must be like that secret island called *Eιβό*, lying in some Egyptian lake, which was reported to Herodotus as having concealed itself from human eyes for five hundred and four years — a capital place it must have been against duns and the sheriff; for it was an English mile in diameter, and yet no man could see it until a fugitive king, happening to be hard pressed in the rear, dived into the water, and came up to the light ir

the good little island ; where he lived happily for fifty years, and every day got bousy as a piper, in spite of all his enemies, who were roaming about the lake night and day to catch his most gracious majesty. He was king of Elbo, at least, if he had no particular subjects but himself, as Nap was in our days of Elba ; and perhaps both were less plagued with rebels than when sitting on the ampler thrones of Egypt and France. But surely the good Major must have dreamed a dream about this word *Africa* ; for how would it look in Ionic Greek — *Αφρική*? Did any man ever see such a word? However, let not the reader believe that we are triumphing meanly in the advantage of our Greek. Milton, in one of his controversial works, exposing an insolent antagonist who pretended to a knowledge of Hebrew, which in fact he had not, remarks, that the man must be ignoble, whoever he were, that would catch at a spurious credit, though it were but from a language which really he did not understand. But so far was Major Rennell from doing this, that, when no call upon him existed for saying one word upon the subject, frankly he volunteered a confession to all the world — that Greek he had none. The marvel is the greater that, as Saunderson, blind from his infancy, was the best lecturer on colors early in the eighteenth century, so by far the best commentator on the Greek Herodotus has proved to be a military man, who knew nothing at all of Greek. Yes, mark the excellence of upright dealing. Had Major Rennell pretended to Greek, were it but as much as went to the spelling of the word Africa, here was he a lost man. *Blackwood's Magazine* would now have exposed him. Whereas, things being as they are, we respect him and admire

him sincerely. And, as to his wanting this one accomplishment, every man wants some. We ourselves can neither dance a hornpipe nor whistle Jim Crow, without driving the whole musical world into black despair.

Africa, meantime, is a word imported into Herodotus by Mr. Beloe ; whose name, we have been given to understand, was pronounced like that of our old domesticated friend the *bellows*, shorn of the *s* ; and whose translation, judging from such extracts as we have seen in books, may be better than Littlebury's ; but, if so, we should be driven into a mournful opinion of Mr. Littlebury. Strange that nearly all the classics, Roman as well as Greek, should be so meanly represented by their English reproducers. The French translators, it is true, are worse as a body. But in this particular instance of Herodotus they have a respectable translator. Larcher read Greek sufficiently ; and was as much master of his author's peculiar learning as any one *general* commentator that can be mentioned.

But Africa the thing, not Africa the name, is that which puzzles all students of Herodotus, as, indeed, no little it puzzled Herodotus himself. Rennell makes one difficulty where in fact there is none ; viz. that sometimes Herodotus refers Egypt to Libya, and sometimes refuses to do so. But in this there is no inconsistency, and no forgetfulness. Herodotus wisely adopted the excellent rule of ‘thinking with the learned, and talking with the people.’ Having once firmly explained his reasons for holding Egypt to be neither an Asiatic nor an African, but the neutra. frontier artificially created by the Nile, as a long cor.ridor of separation between Asia and Africa, after

wards, and generally, he is too little of a pedant to make war upon current forms of speech. What is the use of drawing off men's attention, in questions about *things*, by impertinent provisions of diction or by alien theories? Some people have made it a question — Whether Great Britain were not extra European? and the Island of Crete is generally assumed to be so. Some lawyers also, nay, some courts of justice, have entertained the question — Whether a man could be held related to his own mother? Not as though too remotely related, but as too nearly, and in fact absorbed within the lunar beams. Yet, in all such cases, the publicist — the geographer — the lawyer, continue to talk as other people do; and, assuredly, the lawyer would regard a witness as perjured who should say, in speaking of a woman notoriously his mother, ‘Oh! I do assure you, Sir, the woman is no relation of mine.’ The world of that day (and, indeed, it is not much more candid even now) would have it that Libya comprehended Egypt; and Herodotus, like the wise man that he was, having once or twice lodged his protest against that idea, then replies to the world — ‘Very well, if you say so, it *is* so;’ precisely as Petruchio’s wife, to soothe her mad husband, agrees that the sun is the moon; and, back again, that it is *not* the moon.

Here there is no real difficulty; for the arguments of Herodotus are of two separate classes, and both too strong to leave any doubt that his private opinion never varied by a hair’s breadth on this question. And it was a question far from verbal, of which any man may convince himself by reflecting on the disputes, at different periods, with regard to Macedonia (both *Macedonias* the original germ, and *Macedonia* the expanded

kingdom) as a claimant of co-membership in the household of Greece ; or on the disputes, more angry if less scornful, between Carthage and Cyrene as to the true limits between the daughter of Tyre and the daughter of Greece. The very color of the soil in Egypt—the rich black loam, precipitated by the creative river—already symbolized to Herodotus the deep repulsion lying between Egypt on the one side, and Libya, where all was red ; between Egypt on the one side, and Asia, where all was calcined into white sand. And, as to the name, does not the reader catch us still using the word ‘ Africa ’ instead of Libya, after all our sparring against that word as scarcely known by possibility to Herodotus ?

But, beyond this controversy as to the true marches or frontier lines of the two great continents in common—Asia and Africa—there was another and a more grave one as to the size, shape and limitations of Africa in particular. It is true that both Europe and Asia were imperfectly defined for Herodotus. But he fancied otherwise ; for them he could trace a vague, rambling outline. Not so for Africa, unless a great event in Egyptian records were adopted for true. This was the voyage of circumnavigation accomplished under the orders of Pharaoh Necho. Disallowing this earliest recorded *Periplus*, then no man could say of Africa whether it were a large island or a boundless continent having no outline traceable by man, or (which, doubtless, would have been the favorite creed) whether it were not a technical *akte* such as Asia Minor ; that is, not a peninsula like the Peloponnesus, or the tongues of land near Mount Athos — because in that case the idea required

narrow neck or isthmus at the point of junction with the adjacent continent — but a square, tabular plate of ground, ‘a block of ground’ (as the Americans say) having three sides washed by some sea, but a fourth side absolutely untouched by any sea whatever. On this word *akté*, as a term but recently drawn out of obscurity, we shall say a word or two further on; at present we proceed with the great African *Periplus*. We, like the rest of this world, held this to be a pure fable, so long as we had never anxiously studied the ancient geography, and consequently had never meditated on the circumstances of this story under the light of that geography, or of the current astronomy. But we have since greatly changed our opinion. And, though it would not have shaken that opinion to find Rennell dissenting, undoubtedly it much strengthened our opinion to find so cautious a judge concurring. Perhaps the very strongest argument in favor of the voyage, if we speak of any *single* argument, is that which Rennell insists on — namely, the sole circumstance reported by the voyagers which Herodotus pronounced incredible, the assertion that in one part of it they had the sun on the right hand. And as we have always found young students at a loss for the meaning of that expression, since naturally it struck them that a man might bring the sun at any place on either hand, or on neither, we will stop for one moment to explain, for the use of such readers and ladies, that, as in military descriptions, you are always presumed to look *down* the current of a river, so that the ‘right’ bank of the Rhine, for instance, is *always* o a soldier the German bank, the ‘left’ *always* the French bank, in contempt of the traveller’s position;

so, in speaking of the sun, you are presumed to place your back to the east, and to accompany him on his daily route. In that position, it will be impossible for a man in our latitudes to bring the sun on his *right* shoulder, since the sun never even rises to be vertically over his head. First, when he goes south so far as to enter the northern tropic, would such a phenomenon be possible? and if he persisted in going beyond the equator and southern tropic, then he would find all things inverted as regards our hemisphere. Then he would find it as impossible, when moving concurrently with the sun, *not* to have the sun on his right hand, as with us to realize that phenomenon. Now, it is very clear, that if the Egyptian voyagers did actually double the Cape of Good Hope so far to the south of the equator, then, by mere necessity, this inexplicable phenomenon (for to them it *was* inexplicable) would pursue them for months in succession. Here is the point in this argument which we would press on the reader's consideration; and, inadvertently, Rennell has omitted this aspect of the argument altogether. To Herodotus, as we have seen, it was so absolutely incredible a romance, that he rejected it summarily. And why not, therefore, 'go the whole hog,' and reject the total voyage, when thus in *his* view partially discredited? That question recalls us to the certainty that there must have been *other* proofs, independent of this striking allegation, too strong to allow of scepticism in this wise man's mind. He fancied (and with *his* theory of the heavens, in which there was no equator, no central limit, no provision of equal tropics on either hand of that limit, could he have done otherwise than fancy?) that Jack,

After his long voyage, having then no tobacco for his recreation, and no grog, took out his allowance in the shape of wonder-making. He ‘bounced’ a little, he ‘Cretized;’ and who could be angry? And laughable it is to reflect, that, like the poor credulous mother, who listened complacently to her sea-fearing son whilst using a Sinbad’s license of romancing, but gravely reproved him for the sin of untruth when he told her of flying fish, or some other simple zoölogical fact — so Herodotus would have made careful memoranda of this Egyptian voyage had it told of men ‘whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders,’ (since, if he himself doubted about the one-eyed Arimaspians, he yet thought the legend entitled to a report,) but scouted with all his energy the one great truth of the *Periplus*, and eternal monument of its reality, as a fable too monstrous for toleration. On the other hand, for us, who know its truth, and how *inevitably* it must have haunted for months the Egyptians in the face of all their previous impressions, it ought to stand for an argument, strong ‘as proofs of holy writ,’ that the voyage did really take place. There is exactly one possibility, but a very slight one, that this truth might have been otherwise learned — learned independently; and *that* is, from the chance that those same Africans of the interior who had truly reported the Niger to Herodotus, (though erroneously as a section of the Nile,) might simultaneously have reported the phenomena of the sun’s course. But we reply to that possible suggestion — that in fact it could scarcely have happened. Many other remarkable phenomena of Nigritia had *not* been reported; or had been dropped out of the record as idle or worthless. Secondly, as slaves

they would have obtained little credit, except when falling in with a previous idea or belief. Thirdly, none of these men would be derived from any place to the south of the line, still less south of the southern tropic. Generally they would belong to the northern tropic : and (that being premised) what would have been the true form of the report? Not that they had the sun on the right hand ; but that sometimes he was directly vertical, sometimes on the left hand, sometimes on the right. ‘ What, ye black villains ! The sun, that never was known to change, unless when he reeled a little at seeing the anthropophagous banquet of Thyestes, — *he* to dance cotillions in this absurd way up and down the heavens, — why, hamstringing is too light a punishment for such insults to Apollo,’ — so would a Greek have spoken. And, at least, if the report had survived at all, it would have been in this shape — as the report of an *uncertain* movement in the African sun.

But as a regular nautical report made to the Pharaoh of the day, as an extract from the log-book, for this reason it must be received as unanswerable evidence, as an argument that *never* can be surmounted on behalf of the voyage, that it contradicted all theories whatsoever — Greek no less than Egyptian — and was irreconcilable with all systems that the wit of men had yet devised [viz., two centuries before Herodotus] for explaining the solar motions. Upon this logic we will take our stand. Here is the strong-hold, the citadel, of the truth. Many a thing has been fabled, many a thing carefully passed down by tradition as a fact of absolute experience, simply because it fell in with some previous fancy or prejudice of men. And even Baron

Munchausen's amusing falsehoods, if examined by a logician, will uniformly be found squared or adjusted; not indeed to a belief, but to a whimsical sort of plausibility, that reconciles the mind to the extravagance for the single instant that is required. If he drives up a hill of snow, and next morning finds his horse and gig hanging from the top of a church steeple, the monstrous fiction is still countenanced by the sudden thaw that had taken place in the night-time, and so far physically possible as to be removed beyond the limits of magic. And the very disgust, which revolts us in a *supplement* to the baron, that we remember to have seen, arises from the neglect of those smooth plausibilities. We are there summoned to believe blank impossibilities, without a particle of the baron's most ingenious and winning speciousness of preparation. The baron candidly admits the impossibility; faces it; regrets it for the sake of truth: but a *fact* is a *fact*; and he puts it to our equity — whether we also have not met with strange events. And never in a single instance does the baron build upwards, without a massy foundation of specious physical possibility. Whereas the fiction, if it had been a fiction, recorded by Herodotus, is precisely of that order which must have roused the '*incredulus odi*' in the fulness of perfection. Neither in the wisdom of man, nor in his follies, was there one resource for mitigating the disgust which would have pursued it. This powerful reason for believing the main fact of the circumnavigation — let the reader, courteous or not, if he is but the logical reader, condescend to balance in his judgment.

Other arguments, only less strong on behalf of the voyage, we will not here notice — except this one,

most reasonably urged by Rennell, from his peculiar familiarity, even in that day, (1799,) with the currents and the prevalent winds of the Indian Ocean; viz., that such a circumnavigation of Africa was almost sure to prosper if commenced from the Red Sea, (as it was,) and even more sure to fail if taken in the inverse order; that is to say, through the Straits of Gibraltar, and so down the western shore of Africa in the first place. Under that order, which was peculiarly tempting for two reasons to the Carthaginian sailor or a Phœnician, Rennell has shown how all the currents, the monsoons, &c., would baffle the navigator; whilst, taken in the opposite series, they might easily co-operate with the bold enterpriser, so as to waft him, if once starting at a proper season, almost to the Cape, before (to use Sir Bingo Binks' phrase) he could say dumpling. Accordingly, a Persian nobleman of high rank, having been allowed to commute his sentence of capital punishment for that of sailing round Africa, did actually fail from the cause developed by Rennell. Naturally he had a Phœnician crew, as the king's best nautical subjects. Naturally they preferred the false route. Naturally they failed. And the nobleman, returning from transportation before his time, as well as *re infectâ*, was executed.

But (ah, villainous word!) some ugly objector puts in his oar, and demands to know — why, if so vast an event had actually occurred, it could have ever been forgotten, or at all have faded? To this we answer briefly, what properly ought to form a separate section in our notice of Herodotus. The event was *not so vast as we*, with our present knowledge of Africa, should regard it.

This is a very interesting aspect of the subject. We laugh long and loud when we hear Des Cartes (great man as he was) laying it down amongst the golden rules for guiding his studies, that he would guard himself against all ‘prejudices ;’ because we know that when a prejudice of any class whatever is seen as such, when it is recognized for a prejudice, from that moment it ceases to *be* a prejudice. Those are the true baffling prejudices for man, which he never suspects for prejudices. How widely, from the truisms of experience, could we illustrate this truth ! But we abstain. We content ourselves with this case. Even Major Rennell, starting semi-consciously from his own previous knowledge, (the fruit of researches a thousand years later than Herodotus,) lays down an Africa at least ten times too great for meeting the Greek idea. Unavoidably Herodotus knew the Mediterranean dimensions of Africa ; else he would have figured it to himself as an island, equal perhaps to Greece, Macedon and Thrace. As it was, there is no doubt to us, from many indications, that the Libya of Herodotus, after all, did not exceed the total bulk of Asia Minor carried eastwards to the Tigris. But there is not such an awful corrupter of truth in the whole world — there is not such an unconquerable enslaver of men’s minds — as the blind instinct by which they yield to the ancient root-bound, trebly-anchored prejudications of their childhood and original belief. Misconceive us not, reader. We do not mean that, having learned such and such doctrines, afterwards they cling to them by affection. Not at all. We mean that, duped by a word and the associations clinging to it, they cleave to certain notions, not from any partiality to them, but because this pre-occupation

intercepts the very earliest dawn of a possible conception or conjecture in the opposite direction. The most tremendous error in human annals is of that order. It has existed for seventeen centuries in strength ; and is not extinct, though public in its action, as upon another occasion we shall show. In this case of Africa, it was not that men resisted the truth according to the ordinary notion of a ‘prejudice ;’ it was that every commentator in succession upon Herodotus, coming to the case with the fullest knowledge that Africa was a vast continent, ranging far and wide in both hemispheres, unconsciously slipped into the feeling, that this had always been the belief of men ; possibly some might a little fall short of the true estimate, some a little exceed it ; but that, on the whole, it was at least as truly figured to men’s minds as either of the two other continents. Accordingly, one and all have presumed a bulk for the Libya of Herodotus absolutely at war with the whole indications. And if they had once again read Herodotus under the guiding light furnished by a blank denial of this notion, they would have found a meaning in many a word of Herodotus, such as they never suspected whilst trying it only from one side. In this blind submission to a prejudice of words and clustering associations, Rennell also shares.

It will be retorted, however, that the long *time* allowed by Herodotus for the voyage argues a corresponding amplitude of dimensions. Doubtless a time upwards of two years, is long for a modern *Periplus*, even of that vast continent. But Herodotus knew nothing of monsoons, or trade-winds or currents : he allowed nothing for these accelerating forces, which

were enormous, though allowing fully [could any Greek have neglected to allow?] for all the retarding forces. Daily advances of thirty-three miles at most; nightly reposes, of necessity to men without the compass; above all, a *coasting* navigation, searching (if it were only for water) every nook and inlet, bay, and river's mouth, except only where the winds or currents might violently sweep them past these objects. Then we are to allow for a long stay on the shore of Western Africa, for the sake of reaping, or having reaped by natives, a wheat harvest—a fact which strengthens the probability of the voyage, but diminishes the disposable time which Herodotus would use as the exponent of the space. We must remember the *want of sails aloft* in ancient vessels, the awkwardness of their build for fast sailing, and, above all, their cautious policy of never tempting the deep, unless when the wind would not be denied. And, in the meantime, all the compensatory forces of air and water, as utterly unsuspected by Herodotus, we must subtract from his final summation of the effective motion, leaving for the actual measure of the sailing, as inferred by Herodotus—consequently for the measure of the *virtual* time, consequently of the African space, as only to be collected from the time so collected—a very small proportion indeed, compared with the results of a similar voyage, even by the Portuguese, about A. D. 1500. To Herodotus we are satisfied that Libya (disarming it of its power over the world's mind, in the pompous name of Africa) was not bigger than the true Arabia as known to ourselves.

And hence, also, by a natural result, the obliteration of this *Periplus* from the minds of men. It accom-

plished no great service, as men judged. It put a zone about a large region, undoubtedly ; but what sort of a region ? A mere worthless wilderness, now θηριώδης dedicated by the gods to wild beasts, now ἀμυώδης trackless from sands, and everywhere fountainless, arid, scorched (as they believed) in the interior. Subtract Egypt, as not being part, and to the world of civilization at that time Africa must have seemed a worthless desert, except for Cyrene and Carthage, its two choice gardens, already occupied by Phœnicians and Greeks. This, by the way, suggests a new consideration, viz. that even the Mediterranean extent of Africa must have been unknown to Herodotus — since all beyond Carthage, as Mauritania, &c., would wind up into a small inconsiderable tract, as being *dispuncted* by no great states or colonies.

Therefore it was that this most interesting of all circumnavigations at the present day did virtually and could not but perish as a vivid record. It measured a region which touched no man's prosperity. It recorded a discovery, for which there was no permanent appreciator. A case exists at this moment, in London, precisely parallel. There is a chart of New Holland still preserved among the *κειμήλια* of the British Museum, which exhibits a *Periplus* of that vast region, from some navigator, almost by three centuries prior to Captain Cook. A rude outline of Cook's labors in that section had been anticipated at a time when it was not wanted. Nobody cared about it: value it had none or interest ; and it was utterly forgotten. That it did not also perish in the literal sense, as well as in spirit was owing to an accident.

IV.—*The Geographical AKTÉ of Greece.*

We had intended to transfer, for the use of our readers, the diagram imagined by Niebuhr in illustration of this idea. But our growing exorbitance from our limits warns us to desist. Two points only we shall notice : — 1. That Niebuhr — not the traveller, as might have been expected, but his son, the philosophic historian — first threw light on this idea, which had puzzled multitudes of honest men. Here we see the same similarity as in the case of Rennell ; in that instance, a man without a particle of Greek, ‘whipped’ (to speak *Kentuckicé*) whole crowds of sleeping drones who had more than they could turn to *any* good account. And in the other instance, we see a sedentary scholar, travelling chiefly between his study and his bedroom, doing the work that properly belonged to active travellers. 2. Though we have already given one illustration of an *Akté* in Asia Minor, it may be well to mention as another, the vast region of Arabia. In fact, to Herodotus the tract of Arabia and Syria on the one hand, made up one *akté* (the southern) for the Persian empire ; Asia Minor, with part of Armenia, made up another *akté* (the western) for the same empire ; the two being at right angles, and both abutting on imaginary lines drawn from different points of the Euphrates.

V.—*Chronology of Herodotus.*

The commentator of Herodotus, who enjoys the reputation of having best unfolded his chronology, is the French President Buhier. We cannot say that this opinion coincides with our own. There is a la-

mentable imbecility in all the chronological commentators, of two opposite tendencies. Either they fall into that folly of drivelling infidelity, which shivers at every fresh revelation of geology, and every fresh romance of fabulous chronology, as fatal to religious truths ; or, with wiser feelings but equal silliness, they seek to protect Christianity by feeble parryings, from a danger which exists only for those who never had any rational principles of faith ; as if the mighty *spiritual* power of Christianity were to be thrown upon her defence, as often as any old woman's legend from Hindostan, (see Bailly's *Astronomie*,) or from Egypt, (see the whole series of chronological commentators on Herodotus,) became immeasurably extravagant, and exactly in proportion to that extravagance. Amongst these latter chronologers, perhaps Larcher is the most false and treacherous. He affects a tragical start as often as he rehearses the traditions of the Egyptian priests, and assumes a holy shuddering. ‘ Eh quoi ! Ce seroit donc ces gens-là, qui auroient osé insulter à notre sainte religion ! ’ But, all the while, beneath his mask the reader can perceive, not obscurely, a perfidious smile ; as on the face of some indulgent mother, who affects to menace with her hand some favorite child at a distance, whilst the present subject of a stranger's complaint, but, in fact, ill disguises her foolish applause to its petulance.

Two remarks only we shall allow ourselves upon this extensive theme, which, if once entered in good earnest, would go on to a length more than commensurate with all the rest of our discussion.

1. The three hundred and thirty kings of Egypt who were interposed by the Egyptian priests, between

the endless dynasty of the gods, and the pretty long dynasty of real kings, (the Shepherds, the Pharaohs, &c.) are upon this argument to be objected as mere unmeaning fictions, viz. *that they did nothing*. This argument is reported as a fact, (*not as an argument of rejection,*) by Herodotus himself, and reported from the volunteer testimony of the priests themselves; so that the authority for the number of kings, is also their inertia. Can there be better proof needed, than that they were men of straw, got up to color the legend of a prodigious antiquity? The reign of the gods was felt to be somewhat equivocal, as susceptible of allegoric explanations. So this long human dynasty is invented to furnish a substantial basis for the extravagant genealogy. Meantime, the whole three hundred and thirty are such absolute *fainéans*, that, confessedly, not one act — not one monument of art or labor — is ascribed to their auspices; whilst *every one* of the real unquestionable sovereigns, coinciding with known periods in the tradition of Greece, or with undeniable events in the divine simplicity of the Hebrew Scriptures, is memorable for some warlike act, some munificent institution, or some almost imperishable monument of architectural power.

2. But weaker even than the fabling spirit of these genealogical inanities, is the idle attempt to explode hem, by turning the years into days. In this way, it is true, we get rid of pretensions to a cloudy antiquity, by wholesale clusters. The moonshine and the fairy tales vanish — but how? To leave us all in a moonless quagmire of substantial difficulties, from which (as has been suggested more than once) there is no extrication at all; for if the diurnal years are to rec-

oncile us to the three hundred and thirty kings, what becomes of the incomprehensibly short reigns, (not averaging above two or three months for each,) on the long basis of time assumed by the priests ; and this in the most peaceful of realms, and in fatal contradiction to another estimate of the priests, by which the kings are made to tally with as many *γένεατ*, or generations of men ? Herodotus, and doubtless the priests, understood a generation in the sense then universally current, agreeably to which, three generations were valued to a century.

But the questions are endless which grow out of Herodotus. Pliny's Natural History has been usually thought the greatest treasure-house of ancient learning. But we hold that Herodotus furnishes by much the largest basis for vast commentaries revealing the archæologies of the human race : whilst, as the eldest of prose writers, he justifies his majestic station as **a brotherly assessor on the same throne with Homer.**

PLATO'S REPUBLIC.

THERE is no reader who has not heard of Solon's apologetic distinction between the actual system of laws, framed by himself for the Athenian people, under his personal knowledge of the Athenian temper, and that better system which he would have framed in a case where either the docility of the national character had been greater, or the temptations to insubordination had been less. Something of the same distinction must be taken on behalf of Plato, between the ideal form of Civil Polity which he contemplated in the ten books of his Republic, and the practical form which he contemplated in the thirteen books of his Legislative System.* In the former work he supposes himself to be instituting an independent state, on such principles as were philosophically best; in the latter, upon the assumption that what might be the best as an abstraction, was not always the best as adapted to a perverse human

* *Thirteen books.* — There are twelve books of the *Laws*; but the closing book, entitled the *Epinomos*, or Supplement to the *Laws*, adds a thirteenth. We have thought it convenient to designate the entire work by the collective name of the *Legislative System*.

nature, nor under ordinary circumstances the most likely to be durable. He professes to make a compromise between his sense of duty as a philosopher, and his sense of expedience as a man of the world. Like Solon, he quits the normal for the attainable; and from the ideal man, flexible to all the purposes of a haughty philosophy, he descends in his subsequent speculations to the refractory Athenian as he really existed in the generation of Pericles. And this fact gives a great value to the more abstract work; since no inferences against Greek sentiment or Greek principles could have been drawn from a work applying itself to Grecian habits as he found them, which it would not be easy to evade. ‘This,’ it would have been said, ‘is not what Plato approved — but what Plato conceived to be the best compromise with the difficulties of the case under the given civilization.’ Now, on the contrary, we have Plato’s view of absolute optimism, the true *maximum perfectionis* for social man, in a condition openly assumed to be modelled after a philosopher’s ideal. There is no work, therefore, from which profounder draughts can be derived of human frailty and degradation, under its highest intellectual expansion, previously to the rise of Christianity. Just one century dated from the birth of Plato, which, by the most plausible chronology, very little preceded the death of Pericles the great Macedonian expedition under Alexander was proceeding against Persia. By that time the bloom of Greek civility had suffered. That war, taken in connection with the bloody feuds that succeeded it amongst the great captains of Alexander gave a shock to the civilization of Greece; so that

upon the whole, until the dawn of the Christian era, more than four centuries later, it would not be possible to fix on any epoch more illustrative of Greek intellect, or Greek refinement, than precisely that youth of Plato, which united itself by immediate consecutive succession to the most brilliant section in the administration of Pericles. It was, in fact, throughout the course of the Peloponnesian war — the one sole war that divided the whole household of Greece against itself, giving motive to efforts, and dignity to personal competitions — contemporary with Xenophon and the younger Cyrus, during the manhood of Alcibiades, and the declining years of Socrates — amongst such coevals and such circumstances of war and revolutionary truce — that Plato passed his fervent youth. The bright sunset of Pericles still burned in the Athenian heavens; the gorgeous tragedy and the luxuriant comedy, so recently created, were now in full possession of the Athenian stage; the city was yet fresh from the hands of its creators — Pericles and Phidias; the fine arts were towering into their meridian altitude; and about the period when Plato might be considered an adult *sui juris*, that is, just four hundred and ten years before the birth of Christ, the Grecian intellect might be said to culminate in Athens. Any more favorable era for estimating the Greek character, cannot, we presume, be suggested. For, although personally there might be a brighter constellation gathered about Pericles, at a date twenty-five years antecedent to this era of Plato's maturity, still, as regarded the results upon the collective populace of Athens, *that must have become most conspicuous and palpable in the gene-*

ration immediately succeeding. The thoughtfulness impressed by the new theatre, the patriotic fervor generated by the administration of Pericles, must have revealed themselves most effectually after both causes had been operating through one entire generation. And Plato, who might have been kissed as an infant by Pericles, but never could have looked at that great man with an eye of intelligent admiration — to whose ear the name of Pericles must have sounded with the same effect as that of Pitt to the young men of our British Reform Bill — could yet better appreciate the elevation which he had impressed upon the Athenian character, than those who, as direct coevals of Pericles, could not gain a sufficient ‘elongation’ from his beams to appreciate his lustre. Our inference is — that Plato, more even than Pericles, saw the consummation of the Athenian intellect, and witnessed more than Pericles himself the civilization effected by Pericles.

This consideration gives a value to every sentiment expressed by Plato. The Greek mind was then more intensely Greek than at any subsequent period. After the period of Alexander, it fell under exotic influences — alien and Asiatic in some cases, regal and despotic in others. One hundred and fifty years more brought the country under the Roman yoke ; after which the true Grecian intellect never spoke a natural or genial language again. The originality of the Athenian mind had exhaled under the sense of constraint. But as yet, and throughout the life of Plato, Greece was essentially Grecian, and Athens radically Athenian.

With respect to those particular works of Plato which concern the constitution of governments, there

is this special reason for building upon *them* any inferences as to the culture of Athenian society — that probably these are the most direct emanations from the Platonic intellect, the most purely representative of Plato individually, and the most prolonged or sustained effort of his peculiar mind. It is customary to talk of a Platonic philosophy as a coherent whole, that may be gathered by concentration from his disjointed dialogues. Our belief is, that no such systematic whole exists. Fragmentary notices are all that remain in his works. The four minds, from whom we have received the nearest approximation to an orbicular system, or total body of philosophy, are those of Aristotle, of Des Cartes, of Leibnitz, and lastly, of Immanuel Kant. All these men have manifested an ambition to complete the cycle of their philosophic speculations ; but, for all that, not one of them has come near to his object. How much less can any such cycle or systematic whole be ascribed to Plato ! His dialogues are a succession of insulated essays, upon problems just then engaging the attention of thoughtful men in Greece. But we know not how much of these speculations may really belong to Socrates, into whose mouth so large a proportion is thrown ; nor have we any means of discriminating between such doctrines as were put forward occasionally by way of tentative explorations, or trials of dialetic address, and on the other hand, such as Plato adopted in sincerity of heart, whether originated by his master or by himself. There is, besides, a very awkward argument for suspending our faith in any one doctrine as rigorously Platonic. We are assured beforehand, that the intolerance of the Athenian peo-

ple in the affair of Socrates, must have damped the speculating spirit in all philosophers who were not prepared to fly from Athens. It is no time to be prating as a philosophical free-thinker, when bigotry takes the shape of judicial persecution. That one cup of poison administered to Socrates, must have stifled the bold spirit of philosophy for a century to come. This is a reasonable presumption. But the same argument takes another and a more self-confessing form in another feature of Plato's writings ; viz., in his affectation of a double doctrine — esoteric, the private and confidential form authorized by his final ratification — and exoteric, which was but another name for impostures with which he duped those who might else have been calumniators. But what a world of falsehoods is wrapped up in this pretence ! First of all, what unreflecting levity to talk of this twofold doctrine as at all open to the human mind on questions taken generally ! How many problems of a philosophic nature can be mentioned, in which it would be at all possible to maintain this double current, flowing collaterally, of truth absolute and truth plausible ? No such double view would be often available under any possible sacrifice of truth. Secondly, if it were, how thoroughly would that be to adopt and renew those theatrical pretences of the itinerant *Sophistæ*, or encyclopædic hawkers of knowledge, whom elsewhere and so repeatedly, Plato, in the assumed person of Socrates, had contemptuously exposed. Thirdly, in a philosophy by no means remarkable for its opulence in ideas, which moves at all only by its cumbrous superfluity of words, (partly in disguise of which, under the forms of conversation,

we believe the mode of dialogue to have been first adopted,) how was this double expenditure to be maintained? What tenfold contempt it impresses upon a man's poverty, where he himself forces it into public exposure by insisting on keeping up a double establishment in the town and in the country, at the very moment that his utmost means are below the decent maintenance of one very humble household! Or let the reader represent to himself the miserable *charlatanerie* of a gasconading secretary affecting to place himself upon a level with Cæsar, by dictating to three amanuenses at once, when the slender result makes it painfully evident, that to have kept one moving in any respectable manner, would have bankrupted his resources. But, lastly, when this affectation is maintained of a double doctrine, by what test is the future student to distinguish the one from another? Never was there an instance in which vanity was more short-sighted. It would not be possible by any art or invention more effectually to extinguish our interest in a scheme of philosophy — by summarily extinguishing all hope of our separating the true from the false, the authentic from the spurious — than by sending down to posterity this claim to a secret meaning lurking behind a mask. If the key to the distinction between true and false is set down with the philosophy, then what purpose of concealment is attained? Who is it that is duped? On the other hand, if it is *not* sent down, what purpose of truth is attained? Who is it then that is *not* duped? And if Plato relied upon a confidential successor as the oral expounder of his secret meaning, how blind must he have been to the coarse of human contingencies!

ties, who should not see that this tradition of explanation could not flow onwards through four successive generations without inevitably suffering some fatal interruption ; after which, once let the chain be dropped, the links would never be recoverable, as, in effect, we now see to be the result. No man can venture to say, amidst many blank contradictions and startling inconsistencies, which it is that represents the genuine opinion of Plato ; which the ostensible opinion for evading a momentary objection, or for provoking opposition, or perhaps simply for prolonging the conversation. And upon the whole, this one explosion of vanity, of hunger — bitter penury affecting the riotous superfluity of wealth — has done more to check the interest in Plato's opinions than all his mysticism and all his vagueness of purpose. In other philosophers, even in him who professedly adopted the rule of ‘σκότισορ,’ ‘darken your meaning,’ there is some chance of arriving at the real doctrine, because, though hidden, it is one. But with a man who avows a purpose of double-dealing, to understand is, after all, the smallest part of your task. Having perhaps with difficulty framed a coherent construction for the passage, having with much pains entitled yourself to say, — ‘Now I comprehend,’ — next comes the question, *What is it you comprehend?* Why, perhaps a doctrine which the author secretly abjured ; in which he was misleading the world : in which he put forward a false opinion for the benefit of other passages, and for the sake of securing safety to those in which he revealed what he supposed to be the truth.

There is, however, in the following political hypoth.

asis of Plato, less real danger from this conflict of two meanings, than in those cases where he treated a great pre-existing problem of speculation. Here, from the practical nature of the problem, and its more *ad libitum* choice of topics, he was not forced upon those questions, which, in a more formal theorera, he could not uniformly evade. But one difficulty will always remain for the perplexity of the student — viz. in what point it was that Socrates had found it dangerous to tamper with the religion of Greece, if Plato could safely publish the free-thinking objections which are here avowed. In other respects, the *Ideal Republic* of Plato will surprise those who have connected with the very name of Plato a sort of starry elevation, and a visionary dedication to what is pure. Of purity, in any relation, there will be found no traces : of visionariness, more than enough.

The *First* book of the Polity, or general form of Commonwealths, is occupied with a natural, but very immethodical discussion of justice. Justice — as one of those original problems unattainable in solitary life, which drove men into social union, that by a common application of their forces that might be obtained which else was at the mercy of accident — should naturally occupy the preliminary place in a speculation upon the possible varieties of government. Accordingly, some later authors, like Mr. Godwin, in his *Political Justice*, have transmuted the whole question as to forms of social organization into a transcendent question of Justice ; and how it can be fairly distributed in reconciliation with the necessities of a practical administration or the general prejudices of men. A state, a commonwealth, for example, is not simply a head or

supremacy in relation to the other members of a political union ; it is also itself a body amongst other co-equal bodies — one republic amongst other co-ordinate republics. War may happen to arise ; taxation ; and many other burdens. How are these to be distributed so as not to wound the fundamental principle of justice ? They may be apportioned unequally. That would be injustice without a question. There may be scruples of conscience as to war, or contributions to war. That would be a more questionable case ; but it would demand a consideration, and must be brought into harmony with the general theory of justice. For the supreme problem in such a speculation seems to be this — how to draw the greatest amount of strength from civil union ; how to carry the powers of man to the greatest height of improvement, or to place him in the way of such improvement ; and lastly, to do all this in reconciliation with the least possible infringement or suspension of man's individual rights. Under any view, therefore, of a commonwealth, nobody will object to the investigation of justice — as a proper basis for the whole edifice. But the student is dissatisfied with this Platonic introduction — 1st, as being too casual and occasional, consequently as not prefiguring in its course the order of those speculations which are to follow ; 2dly, as too verbal and hair-splitting ; 3dly, that it does not connect itself with what follows. It stands inertly and uselessly before the main disquisition as a sort of vestibule, but we are not made to see any transition from one to the other.

Meantime, the outline of this nominal introduction is what follows : — Socrates has received an invitation to a dinner party [*δεῖπνον*] from the son of Cephalus, ♀

respectable citizen of Athens. This citizen, whose sons are grown up, is naturally himself advanced in years; and is led, therefore, reasonably to speak of old age. This he does in the tone of Cicero's Cato; contending that, upon the whole, it is made burdensome only by men's vices. But the value of his testimony is somewhat lowered by the fact, that he is moderately wealthy; and secondly, (which is more important,) that he is constitutionally moderate in his desires. Towards the close of his remarks, he says something on the use of riches in protecting us from injurious treatment — whether of our own towards others, or of others towards us.

This calls up Socrates, who takes occasion to put a general question as to the nature and definition of injustice. Cephalus declines the further prosecution of the dialogue for himself, but devolves it on his son. Some of the usual Attic word-sparring follows — of which this may be taken as a specimen: — a definition having been given of justice in a tentative way by Socrates himself, as though it might be that quality which restores to every one what we know to be his own; and the eldest son having adopted this definition as true, Socrates then opposes the cases in which, having borrowed a sword from a man, we should be required deliberately to replace it in the hands of the owner, knowing him to be mad. An angry interruption takes place from one of the company called Thrasymachus. This is appeased by the obliging behavior of Socrates. But it produces this effect upon what follows, that in fact from one illustration adduced by this Thrasymachus, the whole subsequent discipline arises. He, amongst other arts which he alleges in evidence of his

views, cites that of government; and by a confusion between mere municipal law and the moral law of universal obligation, he contends that in every land that is just which promotes the interest or wishes of the governing power — be it king, nobles, or people as a body. Socrates opposes him by illustrations, such as Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, here made familiar to all the world, drawn from the arts of cooks, shepherds, pilots, &c.; and the book closes with a general defence of justice as requisite to the very existence of political states; since without some trust reposed in each other, wars would be endless, it is also presumable, that man, if generally unjust, would be less prosperous — as enjoying less of favor from the gods; and finally, that the mind in a temper of injustice, may be regarded as diseased; that it is less qualified for discharging its natural functions; and that thus, whether looking at bodies politic or individuals, the sum of happiness would be greatly diminished, if injustice were allowed to prevail.

BOOK THE SECOND.

In the beginning of this Book, two brothers, Glauco and Adeimantus, undertake the defence of injustice; but upon such arguments as have not even a colorable plausibility. They suppose the case that a man were possessed of the ring which conferred the privilege of invisibility; a fiction so multiplied in modern fairy tales, but which in the barren legends of the Pagan world was confined to the ring of Gyges. Armed with this advantage, they contend that every man would be unjust. But this is change only of fact. Next, how-

ever, they suppose a case still more monstrous; viz that moral distinctions should be so far confounded, as that a man practising all injustice, should pass for a man exquisitely just, and that a corresponding transfer of reputation should take place with regard to the just man: under such circumstances, they contend that every man would hasten to be unjust; and that the unjust would reap all the honors together with all the advantages of life. From all which they infer two things — First, that injustice is not valued for anything in its own nature or essence, but for its consequences; and secondly, that it is a combination of the weak many against the few who happen to be strong, which has invested justice with so much splendor by means of written laws. It seems strange that even for a momentary effect in conversation, such trivial sophistry as this could avail. Because, if in order to represent justice and injustice as masquerading amongst men, and losing their customary effects, or losing their corresponding impressions upon men's feelings, it is necessary first of all to suppose the whole realities of life confounded, and fantastic impossibilities established, no result at all from such premises could be worthy of attention; and, after all, the particular result supposed does not militate in any respect against the received notions as to moral distinctions. Injustice might certainly pass for justice; and as a second case, injustice having a bribe attached to it, might blind the moral sense to its true proportions of evil. But that will not prove that injustice can ever fascinate as injustice, or again, that it will ever prosper as regards its effects in that undisguised manifestation. If, to win upon men's esteem, it must privately wear the mask of

justice; or if, to win upon men's practice, it must previously connect itself with artificial bounties of honor and preferment — all this is but another way of pronouncing an eulogy on justice. It is agreeable, however, to find, that these barren speculations are soon made to lead into questions more directly pertinent to the constitution of bodies politic. Socrates observes that large models are best fitted to exhibit the course of any action or process; and therefore he shifts the field of obstruction from the individual man, armed or not with the ring of Gyges, to regular commonwealths; in which it is, and in their relations to other commonwealths or to their own internal parts, that he proposes to answer these wild sophisms on the subject of justice as a moral obligation.

Socrates lays the original foundation of all political states in want or reciprocal necessity. And of human necessity the very primal shape is that which regards our livelihood. Here it is interesting to notice what is the *minimum* which Plato assumes for the 'outfit' (according to our parliamentary term) of social life. We moderns, for the mounting a colony or other social establishment, are obliged to assume at least five heads of expenditure; viz., 1, food; 2, shelter, or housing; 3, clothing; 4, warmth (or fuel); 5, light. But the two last we owe to our colder climate, and (which is a consequence of that) to our far more unequal distribution of daylight. As the ancients knew nothing of our very short days, so on the other hand they knew nothing, it is true, of our very long ones; and at first sight it might seem as if the one balanced the other. But it is not so; sunrise and sunset were far more nearly for the ancients, than they ever can be for nations in

higher latitudes, coincident with the periods of retiring to rest and rising ; and thus it was that they obtained another advantage — that of evading much call for fuel. Neither artificial light, nor artificial heat, were much needed in ancient times. Hot climates, often more than cold ones, require (it is true) artificial heat after sunset. But the ancient Greeks and Romans, *& fortiori* all nations less refined, were in bed by that time during the periods of their early simplicity, that is, during the periods of their poverty. The total expense in fuel amongst the Greeks, was upon a scale suited to ages in which fossil coal was an unknown staff of life : it was no more than met the simple demands of cookers, and of severe winters ; these, it is true, even in Spain, nay in Syria, are sometimes accompanied with heavy storms of snow.* But, on the other hand, the winters are short ; and even so far north in Italy as Milan, the season of genial spring, and of luxuriant flowers, often commences in February. In contrast with our five requisitions of northern latitudes, which, as implying a higher (because a more provident) scale of existence, have a philosophic value, it is interesting to find Plato, under the person of Socrates, requiring only three ; viz. food, clothes, and lodging. The arts, therefore, which he presumes requisite for establishing a city, are four : one occupied with the culture of the ground ; one with the building of habitations ; and two, ministerial to the adorning, or at least to the protecting of the person. The ploughman before all others for our food — in the second rank,

* ‘*Storms of snow.*’ — For an instance of a very critical fall of snow near Jerusalem not long before our Saviour’s time, see Josephus.

the mason for raising dwelling-houses — and in the last place, the weaver combined with the shoemaker for the manufacturing our dress ; these four artists, says Plato, are the very *minimum* establishment on which a city or a colony can begin to move. But a very few steps will bring us, he remarks, to a call for further arts ; in particular, it will soon be found that it is a sad waste of time for any of the four already mentioned to be interrupted by the necessity of making their several tools and implements. A fifth artist will therefore be found necessary, in the character of tool-maker, in common with all the rest. A sixth and a seventh will be soon called for, in the character of shepherds and herdsmen ; for if sheep and oxen are not indispensable as food, they are so as furnishing the leather required by the shoemaker. And lastly, merchants, for the purpose of exporting the surplus products, and of importing such as are defective, together with resident dealers in all articles of household use are contemplated as completing the establishment. The gradual accession of luxuries in every class is next presumed as what would follow in general, but would not be allowed in Plato's republic ; and, as the increase of population will require additional territory, (though it is an oversight not to have assigned from the first the quantity of soil occupied, and the circumstances of position in regard to neighbors,) this will make an opening for war ; and that again for a regular class of men dedicated to the arts of attack and defence. It is singular that Plato should thus arbitrarily lay his ground of war in aggressive principles — because, if he assumed his territory spacious enough, and the expansion of population as slow as it really was in

Greece, the case in which he finally plants his necessity for war might not occur until the new state should be rich enough to find, in the difficulty supposed, a cause for throwing off colonies, rather than for unprovoked attacks on neighboring states. It is remarkable, however, that Plato, a pagan writer, makes war a subsequent and ministerial phenomenon in civil societies; whereas Hobbes, nominally a Christian, makes the belligerent condition to be that transcendent and original condition of man, out of which society itself arose.

War, however, has begun; and soldiers, as a mercenary class, are henceforwards required. Upon which Plato unfolds his ideas as to the proper qualifications of a soldier. Of course he insists upon courage, athletic powers of body in general, (qualifications so pre-eminently required before the invention of fire-arms,*) and especially upon the power of speed and agility. But it is singular that in describing the temperament likely to argue courage, he insists upon irascibility; whereas, with far more truth of philosophy, his pupil Aristotle, in after years, speaks contemptuously of all courage founded upon anger, as generally spurious in its nature, and liable to the same suspicion as that which is founded upon intoxication.

It is upon this occasion, and in connection with the

* ‘*Fire-arms.*’ — It is very true that the essential principle distinguishing fire-arms, viz., their application to distant warfare making men independent of personal strength, was found in slingers and archers. But these arms of the martial service were always in some disrepute in Greece; even Hercules (in the *Herc. Furens*) is described by Euripides as subject to ridicule and reproach from Lycus, his enemy, on account of his having resorted to archery.

education of this state soldiery, as a professional class needing to be trained expressly for a life of adventurous service, and of hardship, that Plato introduces his celebrated doctrine imputing mischievous falsehood to the poets. The mythology of paganism, it is needless to say, represented the gods under characters the most hideous and disgusting. But the main circumstances in these representations, according to Plato, are mere fictions of Hesiod and of Homer. Strange, indeed, that Plato should ascribe to any poets whatever, so prodigious a power as that of having created a national religion. For the religion of paganism was not something independent of the mythology. It was wholly involved in the mythology. Take away the mythologic legends, and you take away all the objects of worship. The characteristics by which Latona is distinguished from Ceres, Apollo from Mercury, Diana from Minerva, Hebe from Aurora, all vanish, and leave mere nonentities, if the traditional circumstance of their theogony and history is laid aside as fabulous. Besides, if this could be surmounted, and if Plato could account for all the tribes of Hellas having adopted what he supposes to be the reveries of two solitary poets, how could he account for the general argument in these traditions of other distant nations, who never heard so much as the names of the two Greek poets, nor could have read them if they had? The whole speculation is like too many in Plato — without a shadow of coherency; and at every angle presenting some fresh incongruity. The fact really was, that the human intellect had been for some time outgrowing its foul religions; clamorously it began to demand some change; but how little it was able to effect that change

for itself, is evident from no example more than that of Plato; for he, whilst dismissing as fables some of the grosser monstrosities which the Pagan pantheon offered, loaded in effect that deity, whom he made a concurrent party to his own schemes for man, with vile qualities, quite as degrading as any which he removed; and in effect so much the worse, as regarded the result, because, wanting the childish monstrosities of the mythologic legends, they had no benefit from any allegoric interpretations in the background. Thus cruelty and sensuality, if they happen to fall in with a pagan philosopher's notions of state utility, instantly assume a place in his theories; and thence is transferred upon the deities, who are supposed to sanction this system, a far deeper taint of moral pollution than that which, being connected with extravagant or ludicrous tales, might provoke an enlightened mind to reject it with incredulity, or receive it as symbolic. Meantime, it is remarkable that Plato should connect this reform in education specially with his soldiers; and still more so, when we understand his reason. It was apparently on two grounds that he fancied the pagan superstitions injurious to a class of men whom it was important to keep clear of panics. First, on an argument derived from the Hades of the poets, Plato believed the modes of punishment exhibited by these poets to be too alarming, and likely to check by intimidation that career of violence which apparently he thinks requisite in a soldier. Surely he might have spared his anxiety; for if, in any quarter of its barren superstitions, paganism betrayed its impoverished fancy, it was in its pictures of Tartarus, where, besides that the several cases are, at, so scanty, and applied only to monstrous offences:

and 2d, so ludicrous, they are, 3d, all of them ineffectual for terror, were it only by the general impression conveyed that they are allegoric, and meant to be allegoric. Secondly, Plato seems to have had in his thoughts those panic terrors which sometimes arose from the belief that superior beings suddenly revealed themselves in strange shapes; — both in Roman and Grecian experience, these fancied revelations had produced unexpected victories, but also unexpected flights. He argues, accordingly, against the possibility of a god adopting any metamorphosis; but upon the weak scholastic argument, weaker than a cobweb to any superstitious heart, that a celestial being would not leave a better state for a worse. How visionary to suppose that any mind previously inclined to shadowy terrors, and under the operation of solitude, of awful silence, and of wild grotesque scenery in forests or mountains, would be charmed into sudden courage by an *à priori* little conundrum of the logic school! Oh! philosopher, laid by the side of a simple-hearted primitive Christian, what a fool dost thou appear! And after all, if such evils arose from familiarity with the poets, and on that account the soldiery was to be secluded from all such reading — how were they to be preserved from contagion of general conversation with their fellow-citizens? Or, again, on foreign expeditions, how were they to be sequestered from such traditions as were generally current, and were everywhere made the subject of dinner recitations, or prelections or of national music?

In the midst of these impracticable solicitudes for the welfare of his soldiers, Plato does not overlook the probability that men trained to violence may mutiny

and (being consciously the sole depositaries of the public weapons and skill, as well as originally selected for superior promise of strength) may happen to combine, and to turn their arms against their fellow-citizens. It is painful to see so grave a danger dismissed so carelessly — *tantamne rem tam negligenter?* The sole provision which Plato makes against the formidable danger, is by moral precepts, impressing on the soldier kindness and affability to those whom it was his professional mission to protect. But such mere sanctions of decorum or usage — how weak must they be found to protect any institution merely human, against a strong interest moving in an adverse direction! The institutions of Romulus, in a simple and credulous age, had the consecration (perhaps not imaginary, but, beyond a doubt, universally believed) of heaven itself — a real sanctity guarded the institutions of Rome, which yet rocked and quaked for centuries under the conflicting interests of the citizens. But a philosopher's republic, in an age of philosophy and free-thinking, must repose upon human securities. Show any order of men a strong change setting in upon the current of their civil interests, and they will soon be led to see a corresponding change in their duties. Not to mention that the sense of duty must be weak at all times amongst men whom Plato supposes expressly trained to acts of violence, whom he seeks to wean from the compunction of religion, and whose very service and profession had its first origin in acknowledged rapacity. Thus, by express institution of Plato, and by his own forecasting, had the soldiery arisen. Thus had the storm been called up; and it would be too late to bid it wheel this way or

that, after its power had been consciously developed, and the principles which should control this power were found to be nothing more than the ancient intentions of a theoretic founder, or the particular interests of a favored class.' Besides, it will be seen further on, that the soldiers are placed under peculiar disadvantages—they are to possess nothing; and thus, in addition to the strong temptation of conscious power, they are furnished with a second temptation in their painful poverty, contrasted with the comparative wealth of the cowardly citizens whom they protect; and finally, with a third, (which also furnished an excuse,) in the feeling that they are an injured class.

BOOK THE THIRD.

Plato is neither methodic nor systematic; he has neither that sort of order which respects the connection of what he teaches as a thing to be understood, nor that which respects its connection as a thing which is to be realized—neither that which concerns the *ratio cognoscendi*, (to adopt a great distinction revived by Leibnitz from the schoolmen,) nor that, on the other hand, which regards the *ratio essendi*. This last neglect he could not have designed; the other perhaps he did. And the very form of dialogue or conversations was probably adopted to intimate as much. Be that as it may, we look in vain for any such distribution of the subject as should justify the modern division into separate books. The loose order of colloquial discussion, sometimes going back, sometimes leaping forward with impatient anticipation, and then again thoughtfully resuming a topic insufficiently examined—such is the law of succession by which

the general theme is slowly advanced, and its particular heads are casually unfolded.

Accordingly, in this third book the subject of the soldiery is resumed; and the proper education for that main column of the state, on which its very existence is openly founded, engages the more circumstantial attention of Plato. The leading object kept in view, as regards the mental discipline, is to brace the mind against fear. And here, again, Plato comes back upon the poets, whom he taxes with arts of emasculation, in reference to the hardy courage which his system demands. He distributes the poets into the two great classes of narrative and dramatic; those who speak directly in their own person, like Homer;⁹⁵ and those who utter their sentiments as ventriloquists, throwing their voice first upon this character of a drama, next upon that. It is difficult to see what purpose Plato had in this distribution; but it is highly interesting to us of this day, because we might otherwise have supposed that, upon a point of delicacy, Plato had forborne to involve in his censure of the poets that body of great dramatists, so recently drawn into existence, and of whom two at least (Euripides and Aristophanes) were in part of their lives contemporary with himself. He does, however, expressly notice them; and, what is more to the purpose, he applies to them his heaviest censure: though on what principle, is somewhat obscure. The nominal reason for his anger is—that they proceed by means of imitation; and that even mimetically to represent woman, has the effect of transfusing effeminacy, by some unexplained process, into the manners of the imitator. Now, really, this at the best would be too

fantastic. But when we reflect on the great tragic poets of Greece, and consider that in the midst of pagan darkness the only rays of moral light are to be found in THEM, and that Milton, almost a bigot, as being a Puritan, yet with that exalted standard of scriptural truth which he carried forever in his mind, refers to these poets, and the great theatre which they founded, for the next best thing to Christian teaching — we feel our hearts alienated from Plato. But when we also contrast with this Greek scenical morality and its occasional elevation, the brutal, sensual, and cruel principles which we sometimes find in Plato himself, (more frequently indeed, and more outrageously, than in any other pagan author of eminence,) — it cannot be thought unreasonable that our alienation should amount to disgust. Euripides was truly a great man, struggling for a higher light than he could find. Plato was a thorough Greek, satisfied, so far as ethics were concerned, with the light which existed, nor dreaming of anything higher. And, with respect to the Greek religion, Euripides forestalled, by twenty years, all that Plato has said ; we have his words to this day, and they are much more impressive than Plato's ; and probably⁹⁴ these very words of Euripides first suggested to Plato the doctrine which he so maliciously directs in this place against the very poets as a body, who, through one of their number, first gave currency to such a bold speculation, and first tried as *enfans perdus*, (or the leaders of a forlorn hope,) whether the timid superstition of the Athenians, and the fanaticism founded on their fear, would tolerate such innovations.

After this second sentence of exile against the poets,

— which we cannot but secretly trace to the jealousy of Plato, armed against that section of the Athenian *literati* most in the public favor — we are carried forward to the music of the Greeks. The soldiery are excluded from all acquaintance with any but the austerer modes. But as this is a subject still mysterious even to those who come armed with the knowledge of music as a science, and as no more than a general caution is given, this topic is not one of those which we are called on to discuss.

So slight was the Grecian circuit of education, and especially where mathematics happened to be excluded, that poetry and music apparently bound the practical encyclopædia of Plato. From the mind, therefore, he passes to the physical education. And here we find two leading cautions, of which one, at least, is built on more accurate observation of medical truths than we should have expected in the age of Plato. The first will, perhaps, not much strike the reader, for it expresses only the stern injunction upon every soldier of that temperance as to strong liquors, which in our days has descended (with what permanence we fear to ask) amongst the very lowest and most suffering of human beings. It is, however, creditable to Plato, that he should have perceived the mischievous operation of inebriation upon the health and strength; for in his age, the evil of such a practice was chiefly thrown upon its moral effects, — the indecorums which it caused, the quarrels, the murderous contests, the lasting alienations, and the perilous breaches of confidence. There was little general sense of any evil in wine as a relaxer of the bodily system; as, on the other hand, neither then

nor in our days is there any just appreciation of the subsidiary benefits which sometimes arise from strong liquors, or at least the clamorous call for such liquors, in cold climates where the diet is cold and watery. Edmund Burke, as we remember, in his enlarged wisdom did not overlook this case; we individually have seen too large a series of cases to doubt the fact — that in vast cities, wherever the diet of poor families happens to be thrown too much upon mere watery broths, it is a pure instinct of nature, and often a very salutary instinct, which forces them into a compensatory stimulus of alcohol. The same natural instinct for strong liquor as a partial relief, is said to be prompted by scrofula. In a Grecian climate, and with a limited population, this anomalous use of wine was not requisite; and for the soldiery, enjoying a select diet, it could least of all be needful. Plato shows his good sense, therefore, as well as the accuracy of his observation, in forbidding it. For he notices one effect which invariably follows from the addiction to strong liquors, even where as yet they have not mastered the constitutional vigor; viz. their tendency to produce a morbid sensibility to cold. We ourselves have seen a large party of stout men travelling on a morning of intense severity. Amongst the whole number, nine or ten, there were two only who did not occasionally shiver, or express some unpleasant feeling connected with the cold; and these two were the sole water-drinkers of the party. The other caution of Plato shows even more accuracy of attention; and it is completely verified by modern experience. He is naturally anxious that the diet of the soldiery should be simple and wholesome. Now

it was almost certain that those who reflected on the final object he had in view, would at once interpret his meaning as pointing to the diet of professional athletes. These men for Greece were the forerunners of the Roman gladiators ; as the Greek hippodrome bisected itself into the Roman circus and amphitheatre. And as Plato's object was to secure the means of unusual strength, what more natural than to consult the experience of those who, having long had the very same end, must by this time have accumulated a large science of the appropriate means ? Now, on closer examination, Plato perceived that the end was *not* the same. The gladiatorial schools had before them some day, well known and immutable, of public festivities and games, against which they were to prepare their maximum of bodily power. By the modern and by the ancient system of training, it is notorious that this preparatory discipline can be calculated to a nicety. When the 'fancy' was in favor amongst ourselves, the pugilist, after entering into any legal engagement, under strong penalties, to fight on a day assigned, went into training about six weeks previously ; and by the appointed time he had, through diet, exercise, sleep, all nicely adjusted to the rules of this discipline, brought up his muscular strength and his wind to the summit of what his constitution allowed. Now, certainly, in a general view, the purpose of the Platonic soldier was the same, but with this important difference — that his fighting condition was needed not on one or two days consecutively, but on many days, and not against a day punctually assignable, but against a season or period perhaps of months, quite indeterminate as to its beginning, end, or duration. This one

difference made the whole difference ; for both ancient and modern training concur in these two remarkable facts — 1st. That a condition of physical power thus preternaturally produced cannot be maintained, but that uniformly a very rapid relapse follows to a condition of debility. Like the stone of Sisyphus, the more painfully and with unnatural effort a resisting object has been rolled up to a high summit, with so much the more thundering violence does it run back. The state was too intense not to be succeeded by sudden recoil. 2dly. It has been found that these spasms of preternatural tension are not without danger : apoplexes, ruptures of large blood-vessels, and other modes of sudden death, are apt to follow from the perilous tampering with the exquisite machinery of nature. This also had been the experience of Greece. Time, as a great element in all powerful changes, must be allowed in order to secure their safety. Plato, therefore, lays down as a great law for the physical discipline, that in no part of its elements, whether diet, exercise, abstinence, or gymnastic feats of strength and address, shall the ritual for the soldiers borrow anything from the schools of the *athletæ*.

In the remaining part of this Book, we have some organic arrangements proposed. First, as to the local situation — a strong military position is requisite for the soldiery, and ground must therefore be selected originally which offers this advantage. The position is to be such as may at once resist a foreign enemy and *command the other orders in the state*. Upon this ground, a body of lodgings is to be built ; and in these lodgings a single regard is prescribed to the purpose in view. Direct utility and convenience, without ostentation,

tation, are to preside in the distribution of the parts and in the architectural style ; the buildings are, in fact, to unite at once the uses of a barrack and a fortress.

Next, as this fortress, distinct from the other parts of the city, when connected with arms, and the use of arms, and regular discipline, and select qualities of body, cannot but throw vast power into the hands of the soldiery, so that from being guardians of the city, (as by direct title they are,) they might easily become its oppressors and pillagers, universally the soldiers are to be incapable by law of holding any property whatever, without regard to quality, without regard to tenure. They can inherit nothing ; they can possess nothing ; neither gold nor silver, metals which must not even find an entrance into their dwellings under pretence of custody ; nor land ; nor any other article ; nor, finally, must they exercise a trade.

Thirdly, the administration of affairs, the executive power, and the supreme rank, are vested in the persons of the highest military officers — those who rise to that station by seniority and by extraordinary merit. This is very vaguely developed ; but enough exists to show that the form of polity would be a martial aristocracy, a qualified '*stratocracy*.' In this state, it is not so much true that an opening or a temptation is offered to a martial tyranny, as that, in fact, such a tyranny is planted and rooted from the first with all the organs of administration at its disposal.

Lastly, in what way is the succession to be regulated through the several ranks and functions of the state ? Not exactly, or under positive settlement, by *castes*, or an Egyptian succession of a son to his father's trade.

&c. This is denounced in the sense of an unconditional or unbending system; for it is admitted that fathers of talent may have incompetent sons, and stupid fathers may have sons of brilliant promise. But, on the whole, it seems to be assumed that, amongst the highest, or martial order, the care dedicated to the selection of the parents will ensure children of similar excellence,

‘*Fortes creantur fortibus et bonis,*’

and that amongst the artisans one average level of mediocrity will usually prevail; in which case, the advantage of personal training to the art, under a domestic tutor who never leaves him, must give such a bias to the children of the citizens for their several pursuits, as will justify the principle of hereditary succession. Still, in any case where this expectation fails, a door is constantly kept open for meeting any unusual indication of nature, by corresponding changes in the destiny of the young people. Nature, therefore, in the last resort, will regulate the succession, since the law interposes no further than in confirmation of that order in the succession which it is presumed that nature will have settled by clear expressions of fitness. But in whatever case nature indicates determinately some different predisposition in the individual, then the law gives way; for, says Plato, with emphasis, ‘the paramount object in my commonwealth is—that every human creature should find his proper level, and every man settle into that place for which his natural qualities have fitted him.’

BOOK THE FOURTH.

These last words are not a mere flourish of rhetoric. It is, according to Plato's view, the very distinguishing feature in his polity, that each man occupies his own natural place. Accordingly, it is the business of this Book to favor that view by a sort of fanciful analogy between what we in modern times call the four cardinal virtues, and the four capital varieties of state polity, and also between these virtues and the constituent order in a community. This, however, may be looked upon as no step in advance towards the development of his own Republic, but rather as a halt for the purpose of looking back upon what has been already developed.

The cardinal virtues, as we see them adopted nearly four hundred years after Plato by Cicero, are prudence, fortitude, temperance and justice. The first will find its illustration according to Plato, in the governing part of a state; the second in the defending part, or the military; the third in the relation between all the parts; but the fourth has its essence in assigning to every individual, and to every order, the appropriate right, whether that be property, duty, function, or rank. Other states, therefore, present some analogy to the three first virtues, according to the predominant object which they pursue. But his own, as Plato contends, is a model analogous to the very highest of the virtues, or justice; for that in this state only the object is kept up, as a transcendent object, of suffering no man to assume functions by mere inheritance, but to every individual assigning that office and station for which nature seems to have prepared his qualifications.

This principle, so broadly expressed, would seem to

require more frequent disturbances in the series of hereditary employments than Plato had contemplated in his last Book. Accordingly, he again acknowledges the importance of vigilantly reviewing the several qualifications of the citizens. The rest of the Book is chiefly occupied with a psychological inquiry into a problem sometimes discussed in modern times, (but thoroughly alien to the political problem of Plato;) viz. whether, upon dividing the internal constitution of man into three elements — the irascible passions, the appetites of desire, and the rational principle — we are warranted in supposing three separate substances or hypostases in the human system, or merely three separate offices of some common substance: whether, in short, these differences are organic or simply functional. But, besides that the discussion is both obscure and conducted by scholastic hair-splitting, it has too slight a relation to the main theme before us, to justify our digressing for what is so little interesting.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

At this point of the conversation, Adeimantus, at the suggestion of another person, recalls Socrates to the consideration of that foul blot upon his theory which concerns the matrimonial connections of the army. Not only were these to commence in a principle of unmitigated sensuality — selection of wives by public, not by individual choice, and with a single reference to physical qualities of strength, size, agility — but, which riveted the brutal tendencies of such a law, the wives, if wives they could be called, and the children that might arise from such promiscuous connections were to be held the common property of the order

Ties of any separate kindness, or affection for this woman or for that child, were forbidden as a species of treason ; and if (as in rare cases might happen) after all they should arise, the parties to such holy, but, Platonically speaking, such criminal feelings, must conceal them from all the world — must cherish them as a secret cancer at the heart, or as a martyrdom repeated in every hour. We represent marriages under the beautiful idea of unions. But these Platonic marriages would be the foulest dispersions of the nuptial sanctities. We call them self-dedications of one human creature to another, through the one sole means by which nature has made it possible for any exclusive dedication to be effected. But these Platonic marriages would be a daily renovation of disloyalty, revolt, and mutual abjuration. We, from human society, transfer a reflex of human charities upon inferior natures, when we see the roe-deer, for instance, gathering not into herds and communities like their larger brethren, the fallow-deer or the gigantic red-deer, but into families — two parents everywhere followed by their own fawns, loving and beloved. Plato, from the brutal world, and from that aspect of the brutal world in which it is most brutal, transfers a feature of savage gregariousness which would ultimately disorganize as much as it would immediately degrade. In fact, the mere feuds of jealousy, frantic hatred, and competitions of authority, growing out of such an institution, would break up the cohesion of Plato's republic within seven years. We all know of such institutions as virtually realized ; one case of former ages is recorded by Cæsar, Strabo, &c. ; another of the present day exists amongst the ranges of the Himalaya, and has

been brought by the course of our growing empire within British control. But they are, and have been, connected with the most abject condition in other respects ; and probably it would be found, if such societies were not merely traversed by the glasses of philosophers in one stage of their existence, but steadily watched through a succession of generations, that it is their very necessity rapidly to decay, either by absorption into more powerful societies, built on sounder principles, or by inevitable self-extinction. Certain it is, that a society so constituted through *all* its orders, could breed no conservative or renovating impulses, since all motives of shame, glory, emulation, would operate upon a system untuned, or pitched in a far lower key, wherever sexual love and the tenderness of exclusive preferences were forbidden by law.

Adeimantus, by thus calling for a revision of a principle so revolting, impersonates to the reader his own feelings. He, like the young Athenian, is anxious to find himself in sympathy with one reputed to be so great a philosopher ; or at least, he is unwilling to suppose himself so immeasurably removed from sympathy. Still less can he concede, or even suspend, his own principles in a point which does not concern taste, or refinement of feeling, or transitory modes of decorum, or even the deduction of logic ; in all these points, however rudely shocked, he would, in modest submission to a great name, have consented to suppose himself wrong. But this scruple belongs to no such faculty of taste, or judgment, or reasoning ; it belongs to the primary conscience. It belongs to a region in which no hypothetic assumptions for the sake of argument, no provisional concessions, no neutralizing com-

promises, are ever possible. By two tests is man raised above the brutes ; 1st, As a being capable of religion, (which presupposes him a being endowed with reason;) 2dly, As a being capable of marriage. And effectually both capacities are thus far defeated by Plato — that both have a worm, a principle of corrosion, introduced into their several tenures. He does not, indeed, formally destroy religion ; he supposes himself even to purify it ; but by tearing away as impostures those legends in which, for a pagan, the effectual truth of the pagan mythology, as a revelation of power, had its origin and its residence, he would have shattered it as an agency or a sanction operating on men's oaths, &c. He does not absolutely abolish marriage, but by limiting its possibility, (and how ? Under two restrictions, the most insidious that can be imagined, totally abolishing it for the most honored order of his citizens, viz. — the military order ; and abolishing it for those men and women whom nature had previously most adorned with her external gifts,) he does his utmost to degrade marriage, even so far as it is tolerated. Whether he designed it or not, marriage is now no longer a privilege, a reward, a decoration. On the contrary, *not* to be married, is a silent proclamation that you are amongst the select children of the state — honored by your fellow-citizens as one of their defenders — admired by the female half of the society as dedicated to a service of danger — marked out universally by the public zeal as one who possesses a physical superiority to other men — lastly, pointed out to foreigners for distinction, as belonging to a privileged class. *Are you married?* would be a question from which every man travelling abroad would

shrink, unless he could say — No. It would be asking, in effect — Are you of the inferior classes, a subaltern commanded by others, or a noble? And the result would be, that, like poverty (not pauperism, but indigence or scanty means) at this day, marriage would still have its true, peculiar and secret blessings, but, like poverty again, it would not flourish in the world's esteem ; and, like that, it would prompt a system of efforts and of opinions tending universally in the very opposite direction.

Feeling — but, as a pagan, feeling not very profoundly — these truths, Adeimantus calls for explanations (secretly expecting modifications) of this offensive doctrine. Socrates, however, (that is, Plato,) offers none but such as are re-affirmations of the doctrine in other words, and with some little expansion of its details. The women selected as wives in these military marriages, are to be partners with the men in martial labors. This unsexual distinction will require an unsexual training. It is, therefore, one derivative law in Plato's Republic, that a certain proportion of the young girls are to receive a masculine education, not merely assimilated to that of the men, but by personal association of both sexes in the same *palæstra*, identical with that, and going on concurrently.

To this there are two objections anticipated.

1st. That, as the gymnastic exercises of the ancients were performed in a state of nudity, (to which fact, combined with the vast variety of marbles easily worked by Grecian tools, some people have ascribed the premature excellence in Greece of the plastic

arts,) such a personal exposure would be very trying to female modesty, and revolting to masculine sensibilities. Perhaps no one passage in the whole works of Plato so powerfully reveals his visionary state of disregard to the *actual* in human nature, and his contempt of human instincts, as this horrible transition (so abrupt and so total) from the superstitious reserve* of Grecian society, combined, as in this place it is, with levity so perfect. Plato repudiates this scruple with something like contempt. He contends that it is all custom and use which regulate such feelings, and that a new training made operative, will soon generate a new standard of propriety. Now, with our better views on such points, a plain man would tell the philosopher, that although use, no doubt, will reconcile us to much, still, after all, a better and a worse in such things does exist, previously to *any* use at all, one way or the other; and that it is the

* ‘*Superstitious reserve of Greece.*’ The possibility, however, of this Platonic reverie as an idealism, together with the known practice of Sparta as a reality, are interesting as a commentary on the real tendencies of that Oriental seclusion and spurious delicacy imposed upon women, which finally died away in the Roman system of manners; by what steps, it would be very instructive to trace. Meantime, this much is evident—that precisely in a land where this morbid delicacy was enforced upon women, precisely in that land (the only one in such circumstances that ever reached an intellectual civilization) where women were abridged in their liberty, men in their social refinement, the human race in its dignity, by the false requisitions as to seclusion, and by a delicacy spurious, hollow, and sensual, precisely there the other extreme was possible, of forcing upon women the most profligate exposure, and compelling them, amidst tears and shame, to trample on the very instincts of female dignity. So reconcilable are extremes, when the earliest extreme is laid in the unnatural.

business of philosophy to ascertain this better and worse, *per se*, so as afterwards to apply the best gravitation of this moral agency, called custom, in a way to uphold a known benefit, not to waste it upon a doubtful one, still less upon one which, to the first guiding sensibilities of man, appears dangerous and shocking. If, hereafter, in these martial women, Plato should, under any dilemma, have to rely upon feminine qualities of delicacy or tenderness, he might happen to find that, with the characteristic and sexual qualities of his women, he has uprooted all the rest of their distinguishing graces ; that for a single purpose, arbitrary even in *his* system, he had sacrificed a power that could not be replaced. All this, however, is dismissed as a trivial scruple.

2dly. There is another scruple, however, which weighs more heavily with Plato, and receives a more pointed answer. The objection to a female soldier or a gladiatrix might be applied on a far different principle — not to what *seems*, but to what actually *is* — not by moral sentiment, but by physiology. Habit might make us callous to the spectacle of unfeminine exposures ; but habit cannot create qualities of muscular strength, hardihood, or patient endurance, where nature has denied them. These qualities may be improved, certainly in women, as they may in men ; but still, as the improved woman in her athletic character must still be compared with the improved man, the scale, the proportions of difference, will be kept at the old level. And thus the old prejudice — that women are not meant (because not fitted by nature) for warlike tasks — will revolve upon us in the shape of a philosophic truth.

To a certain extent, Plato indirectly admits this, for (as will be seen) practically he allows for it in his subsequent institutions. But he restricts the principle of female inaptitude for war by the following suggestion : — The present broad distribution of the human species, according to which courage and the want of courage — muscular strength and weakness — are made to coincide with mere sexual distinctions, he rejects as false — not groundless — for there is a perceptible tendency to that difference — but still false for ordinary purposes. It may have a popular truth. But here, when the question is about philosophic possibilities and extreme ideals, he insists upon substituting for this popular generality a more severe valuation of the known facts. He proposes, therefore, to divide the human race upon another principle. Men, though it is the characteristic tendency of their sex to be courageous, are not all courageous ; men, though sexually it is their tendency to be strong, are not all strong : many are so ; but some, in the other extreme, are both timid and feeble : others, again, present us with a compromise between both extremes. By a parity of logic, women, though sexually and constitutionally unwarlike, pass through the same graduated range ; upon which scale, the middle qualities in *them* may answer to the lower qualities in the other sex — the higher to the middle. It is possible, therefore, to make a selection amongst the entire female population, of such as are fitted to take their share in garrison duty, in the duty of military posts or of sentries, and even, to a certain extent, in the extreme labors of the field. Plato countenances the belief that, allowing for the difference in muscular

power of women, considered as animals, (a mere difference of degree,) there is no essential difference, as to power and capacities, between the human male and the female. Considering the splendor of his name, (weighty we cannot call a man's authority whom so few profess to have read, but *imposing* at the least,) it is astonishing that in the agitation stirred by the modern brawlers, from Mary Wollstonecraft downwards, in behalf of female pretensions to power, no more use should have been drawn from the disinterested sanction of Plato to these wild innovations. However, it will strike many, that even out of that one inferiority conceded by Plato, taken in connection with the frequent dependencies of wives and mothers upon human forbearance and human aids, in a way irreconcilable with war, those inferences might be forced one after one, which would soon restore (as a direct logical consequence) that state of female dependency, which at present nature and providence so beautifully accomplish through the gentlest of human feelings. Even Plato is obliged in practice to allow rather more on account of his one sole concession than his promises would have warranted; for he stipulates that these young gladiatrices and other figurantes in the *palæstra*, shall not be put upon difficult or dangerous trials; living in our day, he would have introduced into H. M.'s navy a class of midship-women; but would have exempted them, we presume, from all the night watches, and from going aloft. This, however, might have been mere consideration for the tenderness of youth. But again, in mature life, though he orders that the wives and the children shall march with the armed force to the seat of the

campaign, and on the day of battle shall make their appearance in the rear, (an unpleasant arrangement in our day of flying artillery and rocket brigade,) he does not insist on their mixing in the *mélée*. Their influence with the fighting division of the army, is to lie in their visible presence. But surely at this point, Plato overlooked the elaborate depression of that influence which his own system had been nursing. Personal presence of near female relations, whether in storms at sea, or in battles, has always been supposed to work more mischief by distracting the commander's attention, than good by reminding him of his domestic ties. And since the loss of an East Indiaman, (the Halsewell,) about sixty years ago, in part ascribed to the presence of the captain's daughter, the rules of the British service, we believe, have circumscribed the possibility of such very doubtful influences. But, in Plato's Republic, the influences must have been much more equivocal. A number of women and a number of children are supposed to be ranged on an eminence in the background. The women were undoubtedly, or had been, mothers: but to which of the children individually, and whether to any living child, was beyond their power to guess. Giving the fact that any child to which, in former years, they might give birth, were still in existence, then probably that child would be found amongst the young column of battle-gazers on the ground. But, as to the men, even this conditional knowledge is impossible.³⁵ Multiplied precautions have been taken, that it may ne impossible. From the moment of birth the child has been removed to an establishment where the sternest measures are enforced to confound it beyond all power of recognition.

tion with the crowd of previous children. The object is to place a bar between this recognition and everybody ; the mother and all others alike. Can a cup of water be recovered when poured off into the Danube? Equally impossible, if Plato's intentions are fulfilled, to recover traces of identification with respect to any one of the public children. The public family, therefore, of wives and children are present, but with what probable result upon the sensibilities of the men, we leave the reader to determine, when we have put him in possession of Plato's motive to all this unnatural interference with human affections. Why had he from the first applied so large a body of power (wasted power, if not requisite) to the suppression of what most legislators would look to for their highest resources? It seems bad mechanics — to convert *that* into a resistance, requiring vast expense of engineering to overcome it, which might obviously have been treated as a power of the first magnitude for overcoming other and inevitable resistance. Strong reasons must be brought for such an inversion of the ordinary procedure. What are they in Plato's system? Simply this — that from individual marriages and separate children, not only many feuds arise between man and man, family and family ; a private interest is established as against other private interests ; but also a private parental interest is established in another sense, namely, against the public ; a parental or family interest, differing from the public state interest, and often enough in mortal hostility to that interest.

Be it so : a danger, a pressure, is exposed by Plato in one direction — confronted by what we Christians

should think a far heavier in another; or, to express it more strictly, a gain is sought in one direction -- which gain seems to us fatally compensated by loss in another. But *that* is part of Plato's theory — *that* he confronts with his eyes open — and we are not to oppose them in mere logic, because it is one of the postulates in effect on which his system rests. But we have a right to demand consistency: and, when Plato brings the wives and children on the field of battle in order to sustain the general sentiment of patriotism, he is virtually depending upon that power which he had previously renounced; he is throwing the weight of his reliance upon a providential arrangement which he had tossed aside not as useless merely, but as vicious; he is clinging in his distress to those sanctities, conjugal and parental, of which he had said in his self-confidence — ‘Behold! I will give you something better.’ And tolerably sure we are, that, had Plato prosecuted the details of his theory into more of their circumstantialities, or had he been placed under the torture of a close polemic review, he would have been found reviving for its uses, and for its solution of many perplexities in practice, that very basis of female honor and modesty, which by his practice and by his professions he has so labored earnestly to destroy.

The reader will arrive probably at a pretty fixed opinion as to the service for state purposes likely to arise from this exhibition of a clamorous nursery, children and nurses, upon the field of battle. As a flag, banner, or ensign, if Plato could in any way contrive that the army should regard the nursery militant as the sacred depository of their martial honor, then it is probable that men would fight desperately for *that*.

considered as a trophy, which they regarded but lightly as a household memorial. But this would be unattainable. Even with us, and our profounder Christian feelings, the women attendant upon an army (who, in the Thirty Years' War, on the Catholic side often amounted to another army) have never been elevated into a ‘*pignus sanctum militiæ*.’ The privates and subaltern officers might readily have come into such a view; but the commander-in-chief with his staff would have set their faces against so dangerous a principle—it would have fettered the movements of an army too much; and in most cases would defeat any sudden manœuvres in the presence of an enemy. Mere justice to human powers demands that the point of honor for armies, or for sections of armies, (such as regiments, &c.) should be placed in that which can move concurrently with the main body, no matter for roads, weather, want of provisions, or any other circumstances. Even artillery, therefore, though a subject of martial jealousy, is not made absolutely coincident with the point of martial honor. And another consideration is this—that not only no object ever can be raised into that mode of dignity when all members of the army are not parties to the consecration, but even the enemy must be a party to this act. Accordingly, the sanctity of the flag, as the national honor in a symbolic form confided to a particular regiment, is an inheritance transmitted downwards through many generations of every nation in Christendom. Now, if Plato's republic were even able to translate the point of honor (which for the Greeks consisted in a ritual celebration of the battle by sacrifices, together with a choral chant, and also in the right to erect a frail ma-

memorial of the victory*) to the capture or preservation of the women and children, — still this change could not be accomplished ; for the neighboring states would not be persuaded to terms of ‘reciprocity,’ as the modern economists phrase it. What ! not if they also were Platonic states ? Ay, but that is impossible ; for Plato himself lays the foundation of hope, and the prospect of conquest, for his own state, in the weakness (growing out of luxury, together with the conjugal and parental relations) presumable throughout the neighboring states.

These ambulatory nurseries, therefore, never could be made to interest the honor even of a Platonic army, since no man would consent to embark his own honor upon a stake to which the enemy afforded no corresponding stake : always to expose your own honor to loss with no reversionary gain under any contingency ; always to suffer anxiety in your own person with no possibility of retaliating this anxiety upon the enemy — would have been too much for the temper of Socrates ; and we fear that he would have left even Xanthippe herself, with all her utensils of every kind, as a derelict for the benefit of the enemy in dry weather, when a deluge from upper windows might not have been unwelcome. But if no honor were pledged upon

‘ Frail,’ not from any indisposition to gaseconade : but there was a dark superstition which frightened the Greeks from raising any durable monuments to a triumph over Greeks : judicial calamities would descend upon the victors, Nemesis would be upon their haunches, if they exulted too loudly. Stone, therefore, marble, and brass, were forbidden materials for the *tropaia* ! they were always made of wood. If not, look out for squalls ahead !

the nursery in the rear, the next step would certainly be, that under difficult circumstances, stress of weather, short provisions, or active light cavalry in the rear, the nursery would become the capital nuisance of the army. Ambulatory hospitals, though so evidently

personal interest of the nearest kind, are trying to soldiers when overworked; but ambulatory nurseries, with no intelligible motive for their presence, continual detachments and extra guards on *their* account, with an enemy laughing at the nursery up-roars, would cause a mutiny if Plato were there in person. Sentiment but ill accords with the gross realities of business, as Charles Lamb illustrated (rather beyond the truth in that case) with regard to Lord Camelford's corpse, when clearing the custom-house for interment under an aged tree in Switzerland; and to hawk along with an army a *menagerie* of spectators, against a day of battle, would be an arrangement so little applicable to any but select expeditions, that the general overturn of caravans once a day, and the continual fracture of skulls, would be the least tragical issue within reasonable expectation. Not being 'sacred,' as the depositaries of honor, they would soon become 'profane.' And speaking gravely, when we reflect on the frequency, even in Christian lands, with which, under the trials of extreme poverty, the parental tie gives way — what other result than open insubordination could be expected from a plan which was adapted to a mere melodramatic effect, at the price of universal comfort for months? Not being associated with patriotic honor, as we have endeavored to show and the parental tie being so aerial in any case where neither mother nor child belonged to the individual,

but also so exceedingly questionable in the case of Plato's artifices for concealment having succeeded to the letter — what visionary statesmanship would it prove to build for so much as a day's service, or for an extra effort, upon the pretence of those who could have little other value in the soldier's eye than that they were natives of the same city with himself !

Even this, however, is not the worst : pursuing to the last the regulations of Plato, the reader is more and more surprised by the unconscious inconsistency which emerges : for whilst recollecting the weight of service — the stress which Plato has thrown upon the parental affection in this case — he finds still farther proof of the excessive degradation to which Plato has reduced the rank of that affection as a moral principle : in short, he finds him loading it with responsibility as a duty, whilst he is destroying it as an honor, and polluting it as an elevated enjoyment. Let us follow the regulations to their end : — The guardians of the state, as they are called in their civil relation, the soldiers, as they are called with respect to foreign states and to enemies in general, have been originally selected for their superior qualities of body. Thus the most natural (because the most obvious) grounds of personal vanity, are here at once concentrated by state preference and peculiar rank. In civilized states, these advantages being met and thwarted at every turning by so many higher modes of personal distinction — knowledge, special accomplishments applicable to special difficulties, intellect generally, experience large and comprehensive, or local and peculiar — riches, popular influence, high birth, splendid connections ; the consequence is, that mere physical advantages rank as the

lowest class of pretensions, and practically are not of much avail, except as regards beauty when eminent in women, though even for that the sphere is narrow; since what woman, by mere beauty, ever drew after her such a train of admirers as a few of our modern female writers in verse? Consequently the arrogance in these soldiers of Plato, finding themselves at once acknowledged as the best models of physical excellence in the state, and also, in the second place, raised to the rank of an aristocracy on account of this excellence, would be unlimited. It would be crossed by no other mode of excellence — since no other would be recognized and countenanced by the state.

With this view of their own vast superiority, naturally — and excusably in a state conformed to that mode of thinking — looking upon their own rank as a mere concession of justice to their claims of birth, the soldiers would review their condition in other respects. They would then find that, under the Platonic laws, they enjoyed two advantages: viz. first, a harem furnished with the select females of the state, having precisely the sort of personal pre-eminence corresponding to their own; a modern Mahometan polygamy, in fact, but without the appropriation which constitutes the luxury of Mahometan principles; secondly, a general precedence. On the other hand, to balance these privileges, and even with the most dissolute men greatly to outweigh them, they would find —

1. That they had, and could have, no property; not a fragment: even their arms would be the property of the state; even the dress of mail, in which the ὄπλατα or *men-at-arms*, (heavy-armed cuirassiers, or *cata-phractoi*,) must be arrayed, would return to the

στρατιωτική, or *arsenal*, in time of peace: not a chattel, article of furniture, or personal ornament, but would have a public stamp as it were, upon it, making it felony to sell, or give, or exchange it. It is true that, to reconcile the honorable men, the worshipful paupers, to this austere system, Plato tells us — that the other orders of citizens will not be rich: nobody, in fact, will be allowed to possess any great wealth. But there is still a difference between something and nothing. And then, as to this supposed *maximum* of riches which is to be adopted, no specific arrangements are shown, by which, in consistency with any freedom of action, further accumulation can be intercepted, or actual possession ascertained.

2. ‘But,’ says Plato, ‘what would the fellows want with property? Food, is it? Have they not *that* food at the public cost; and better for their health than any which they would choose? Drink — is there not the river? And if by ill luck it should happen to be a *χειμώνας*, rather dependent upon winter floods and upon snows melting in early summer, is there not the rain at all times in cisterns and tanks, for those who prefer it? Shoemakers and weavers — (if it is shoes and tunics they want) — are they not working throughout the year for their benefit?’ — All this is true: but still they are aware that their own labors and hardships would earn food and clothes upon regular wages: and that, on the general scale of remuneration for mercenary soldiership in Greece, adding their dangers to their daily work, they might obtain enough to purchase even such immoral superfluities as wine.

3. At present, again, this honored class have many wives; none of their fellow-citizens more than one.

But here, again, what a mockery of the truth ! that one is really and exclusively the wife of him whom she has married ; dedicates her love and attentions and her confidential secrecy to that man only ; knows and retains her own children in her own keeping ; and these children regard their own parents as their own sole benefactors. How gladly would the majority of the guardians, after two years' experience of the dissolute barrack, accept in exchange the quiet privacy of the artisan's cottage !

4. The soldiers again, it is urged, enjoy something of that which sweetens a sailor's life, and keeps it from homely insipidity — viz. the prospect of adventure, and of foreign excursions : even danger is a mode of stimulation. But how ? Under what restriction do they enjoy these prospects of peril and adventure ? Never but on a service of peculiar hardship. For it is a badge of their slavery to public uses, that for them only there exists no liberty of foreign travel. All the rest throughout the city, may visit foreign lands ; the honorable class only is confined to the heartless tumult of its dissolute barracks.

Plato evidently felt these bitter limitations of free agency to be, at the same time, oppressive and degrading. Still he did not think himself at liberty to relax them. His theory he conceived to be a sort of watch-work, which would keep moving if all the parts were kept in their places, but would stop on any disturbance of their relations. Not being able to give any relief, the next thing was — to find compensation. And accordingly, in addition to the sensual bait of polygamy already introduced as the basis of his plan, he now proceeds to give a still wider license to appetite. It takes the shape of a dispensation in practice,

from a previous special restriction in one particular direction : the whole body of guardians and their female associates, or ‘wives,’ are excluded from conjugal intercourse except within strict limits as to age ; from the age of twenty to forty for the women, of thirty to fifty for the men, is the range within which they are supposed to be capable of producing a healthy race of children. Within those limits they are licensed : not further. But, by way of compensation, unlimited concubinage is tolerated for the seniors ; with this one dreadful proviso — that any children born from such connections, as presumably not possessing the physical stamina, or other personal advantages looked for from more carefully selected parents, must be exposed. Born of fathers who possess no personal property, these children could have no patrimony ; nor succeed to any place as a tradesman, artisan, or laborer. Succeeding to a state father, they succeed to nothing ; they are thrown as waifs or strays on the state bounty : and for that they are not eligible, as not having been born within the privilege of the state regulations. No party, therefore, known to the state being responsible for their maintenance, they must die. And because the ancients had a scruple. (no scruple of mercy, but of selfish superstition,) as to taking the life by violence from any creature not condemned under some law, the mode of death must be by exposure on the open hills ; when either the night air, or the fangs of a wolf, oftentimes of the great dogs, still preserved in many parts of Greece, usually put an end to the unoffending creature’s life.

Now, with this sensual bounty on infanticide, and this regular machinery for calling into existence such

ill-fated blossoms on the tree of life, and for immediately strewing them on the ground by the icy wind of death, cutting adrift the little boat to go down the Niagara of violent death, in the very next night after its launching on its unknown river of life — could Plato misconceive the result? could he wish to misconceive it, as regarded the pieties of parental love? To make human life cheaper and more valueless than that of the brutes — is that the way to cherish the sanctity of parental affection; upon which affection, however, elsewhere, Plato throws so heavy a burden of duty?

Plato would have been surprised, had he anticipated the discoveries of modern experience as to the effect of marriages so assorted in point of age as he has supposed. This one arrangement, by mere disproportion of the sexes, would have introduced strange disturbances into his system. But for general purpose, it is more important to remark — that the very indulgences of Plato are sensual: from a system in itself sensual in the most cruel degree, Plato grants a dispensation only to effect a Otaheitian carnival of licentious appetite, connected with a contempt of human life, which is excessive even for paganism; since in *that* the exposure of children is allowed as a relief from supposed evils of nature; or (as we now* see in Oude, and heretofore in Cutch) was practised by way of relief from what were regarded as *social* evils, viz., the necessity, in the absence of infanticide, which arose for giving daughters in marriage to men that were their inferiors in birth; whereas here, under the system of Plato, the evil is self-created by the cruel and merciless philosopher with the view of meeting and counteracting ruinous results which nobody had caused but himself.

* [Written during the Indian revolt.]

DINNER, REAL, AND REPUTED.

GREAT misconceptions have always prevailed about the Roman *dinner*. Dinner [*cœna*] was the only meal which the Romans as a nation took. It was no accident, but arose out of their whole social economy. This I shall endeavor to show, by running through the history of a Roman day. *Ridentem dicere verum quid retat?* And the course of this review will expose one or two important truths in ancient political economy, which have been too much overlooked.

With the lark it was that the Roman rose. Not that the earliest lark rises so early in Latium as the earliest lark in England ; that, is, during summer : but then, on the other hand, neither does it ever rise so late. The Roman citizen was stirring with the dawn — which, allowing for the shorter longest-day and longer shortest-day of Rome, you may call about four in summer — about seven in winter. Why did he do this ? Because he went to bed at a very early hour. But why did he do that ? By backing in this way, we shall surely back into the very well of truth : always, where it is possible, let us have the *pourquoi* of the *pourquoi*. The Roman went to bed early for two remarkable reasons. 1st, Because in Rome, built for a martial destiny, every habit of life had reference to

the usages of war. Every citizen, if he were not a mere proletarian animal kept at the public cost, with a view to his *proles* or offspring, held himself a soldier-elect: the more noble he was, the more was his liability to military service; in short, all Rome, and at all times, was consciously ‘in procinct.’⁹⁶ Now it was a principle of ancient warfare, that every hour of daylight had a triple worth, as valued against hours of darkness. That was one reason — a reason suggested by the understanding. But there was a second reason far more remarkable; and this was a reason suggested by a blind necessity. It is an important fact, that this planet on which we live, this little industrious earth of ours, has developed her wealth by slow stages of increase. She was far from being the rich little globe in Cæsar’s days that she is at present. The earth in our days is incalculably richer, as a whole, than in the time of Charlemagne; and at that time she was richer, by many a million of acres, than in the era of Augustus. In that Augustan era we descry a clear belt of cultivation, averaging perhaps six hundred miles in depth, running in a ring-fence about the Mediterranean. This belt, *and no more*, was in decent cultivation. Beyond that belt, there was only a wild Indian cultivation; generally not so much. At present, what a difference! We have that very belt, but much richer, all things considered, *æquatis æquandis*, than in the Roman era and much beside. The reader must not look to single cases, as that of Egypt or other parts of Africa, but take the whole collectively. On that scheme of valuation, we have the old Roman belt, the circum Mediterranean girdle not much tarnished, and we have all the rest of Europe to boot. Such being

he case, the earth, being (as a whole) in that Pagan era so incomparably poorer, could not in the Pagan era support the expense of maintaining great empires in cold latitudes. Her purse would not reach that cost. Wherever she undertook in those early ages to bear man in great abundance, it must be where nature would consent to work in partnership with herself; where *warmth* was to be had for nothing; where *clothes* were not so entirely indispensable, but that a ragged fellow might still keep himself warm; where slight *shelter* might serve; and where the *soil*, if not absolutely richer in reversionary wealth, was more easily cultured. Nature, in those days of infancy, must come forward liberally, and take a number of shares in every new joint-stock concern before it could move. Man, therefore, went to bed early in those ages, simply because his worthy mother earth could not afford him candles. She, good old lady (or good young lady, for geologists know not⁹⁷ whether she is in that stage of her progress which corresponds to gray hairs, or to infancy, or to ‘a *certain age*’) — she, good lady, would certainly have shuddered to hear any of her nations asking for candles. ‘Candles, indeed!’ she would have said, ‘who ever heard of such a thing? and with so much excellent daylight running to waste, as I have provided *gratis*! What will the wretches want next?’

The daylight, furnished *gratis*, was certainly ‘undeniable’ in its quality, and quite sufficient for all purposes that were honest. Seneca, even in his own luxurious period, called those men ‘*lucifugæ*,’ and by other ugly names, who lived chiefly by candle-light. None but rich and luxurious men, nay, even amongst

these, none but idlers, *did* live or *could* live by candle-light. An immense majority of men in Rome never lighted a candle, unless sometimes in the early dawn. And this custom of Rome was the custom also of all nations that lived round the great lake of the Mediterranean. In Athens, Egypt, Palestine, Asia Minor everywhere, the ancients went to bed, like good boys, from seven to nine o'clock.⁹⁸ The Turks and other people, who have succeeded to the stations and the habits of the ancients, do so at this day.

The Roman, therefore, who saw no joke in sitting round a table in the dark, went off to bed as the darkness began. Everybody did so. Old Numa Pompilius himself was obliged to trundle off in the dusk. Tarquinius might be a very superb fellow ; but I doubt whether he ever saw a farthing rushlight. And, though it may be thought that plots and conspiracies would flourish in such a city of darkness, it is to be considered, that the conspirators themselves had no more candles than honest men : both parties were in the dark.

Being up, then, and stirring not long after the lark, what mischief did the Roman go about first ? Now-a-days, he would have taken a pipe or a cigar. But, alas for the ignorance of the poor heathen creatures ! they had neither the one nor the other. In this point, I must tax our mother earth with being really *too* stingy. In the case of the candles, I approve of her parsimony. Much mischief is brewed by candle-light. But it was coming it too strong to allow no tobacco. Many a wild fellow in Rome, your Gracchi, Syllas, Catilines, would not have played ‘ h— and Tommy ’ in the way they did, if they could have soothed their angry stomachs with a cigar : a pipe

has intercepted many an evil scheme. But the thing 's past helping now. At Rome, you must do as 'they does' at Rome. So, after shaving (supposing the age of the *Barbati* to be past), what is the first business that our Roman will undertake? Forty to one he is a poor man, born to look upwards to his fellow-men — and not to look down upon anybody but slaves. He goes, therefore, to the palace of some grandee, some top-sawyer of the senatorian order. This great man, for all his greatness, has turned out even sooner than himself. For he also has had no candles and no cigars ; and he well knows, that before the sun looks into his portals, all his halls will be overflowing and buzzing with the matin susurrus of courtiers — the 'mane salutantes.'¹¹⁹ It is as much as his popularity is worth to absent himself, or to keep people waiting. But surely, the reader may think, this poor man he might keep waiting. No, he might not ; for, though poor, being a citizen, the man is a gentleman. That was the consequence of keeping slaves. Wherever there is a class of slaves, he that enjoys the *jus suffragii* (no matter how poor) is a gentleman. The true Latin word for a gentleman is *ingenius* — a freeman and the son of a freeman.

Yet even here there were distinctions. Under the emperors, the courtiers were divided into two classes : with respect to the superior class, it was said of the sovereign — that he *saw* them ('*videbat*') ; with respect to the other — that he *was seen* ('*videbatur*'). Even Plutarch mentions it as a common boast in his times, ἡμᾶς εἴδεν ὁ βασιλεύς — *Cæsar is in the habit of seeing me* ; or, as a common plea for evading a suit, ιτεροὺς ὄρᾳ μάλλον — *I am sorry to say he is more inclined to look upon others*. And this usage derived itself

(mark that well !) from the *republican* era. The aulic spirit was propagated by the empire, but from a republican root.

Having paid his court, you will suppose that our friend comes home to breakfast. Not at all : no such discovery as ‘breakfast’ had then been made : breakfast was not invented for many centuries after that. I have always admired, and always shall admire, as the very best of all human stories, Charles Lamb’s account of *roast-pork*, and its traditional origin in China. Ching Ping, it seems, had suffered his father’s house to be burned down : the outhouses were burned along with the house : and in one of these the pigs, by accident, were roasted to a turn. Memorable were the results for all future China and future civilization. Ping, who (like all China beside) had hitherto eaten his pig raw, now for the first time tasted it in a state of torrefaction. Of course he made his peace with his father by a part (tradition says a leg) of the new dish. The father was so astounded with the discovery, that he burned his house down once a-year for the sake of coming at an annual banquet of a roast pig. A curious prying sort of a fellow, one Chang Pang, got to know of this. He also burned down a house with a pig in it, and had his eyes opened. The secret was ill kept — the discovery spread — many great conversions were made — houses were blazing in every part of the Celestial Empire. The insurance offices took the matter up. One Chong Pong, detected in the very act of shutting up a pig in his drawing-room, and then firing a train, was indicted on a charge of arson. The chief justice of Pekin, on that occasion, requested an officer of the court to hand him up a piece

of the roast pig, the *corpus delicti*: pure curiosity it was, liberal curiosity, that led him to taste; but within two days after, it was observed, says Lamb, that his lordship's town-house was on fire. In short, all China apostatized to the new faith; and it was not until some centuries had passed, that a man of prodigious genius arose, viz., Chung Pung, who, established the second era in the history of roast pig by showing that it could be had without burning down a house.

No such genius had yet arisen in Rome. Breakfast was not suspected. No prophecy, no type of breakfast, had been published. In fact, it took as much time and research to arrive at that great discovery as at the Copernican system. True it is, reader, that you have heard of such a word as *jentaculum*; and your dictionary translates that old heathen word by the Christian word *breakfast*. But dictionaries are dull deceivers. Between *jentaculum* and *breakfast* the differences are as wide as between a horse-chestnut and a chestnut horse; differences in the *time when*, in the *place where*, in the *manner how*, but pre-eminently in the *thing which*.

Galen is a good authority upon such a subject, since, if (like other Pagans) he ate no breakfast himself, in some sense he may be called the cause of breakfast to other men, by treating of those things which could safely be taken upon an empty stomach. As to the time, he (like many other authors) says, $\pi\epsilon\rho\dot{\imath}\tau\rho\acute{\iota}\eta\rho$, $\dot{\eta}$ ($\tau\ddot{\omega}\mu\alpha\kappa\rho\acute{\iota}\tau\epsilon\rho\omega$) $\pi\epsilon\rho\dot{\imath}\tau\epsilon\tau\acute{\iota}\rho\eta\rho$, about the third, or at farthest about the fourth hour: and so exact is he, that he assumes the day to lie exactly between six and six o'clock, and to be divided into thirteen equal portions. So the time will be a few minutes before nine, or *

few minutes before ten, in the forenoon. That seems fair enough. But it is not time in respect to its location that we are concerned with, so much as time in respect to its duration. Now, heaps of authorities take it for granted, that you are not to sit down — you are to stand; and, as to the place, that any place will do — ‘any corner of the forum,’ says Galen, ‘any corner that you fancy :’ which is like referring a man for his *salle à manger* to Westminster Hall or Fleet Street. Augustus, in a letter still surviving, tells us that he *jentabat*, or took his *jentaculum*, in his carriage; sometimes in a wheel carriage (*in essedo*), sometimes in a litter or palanquin (*in lecticā*). This careless and disorderly way as to time and place, and other circumstances of haste, sufficiently indicate the quality of the meal you are to expect. Already you are ‘sagacious of your quarry from so far.’ Not that we would presume, excellent reader, to liken you to Death, or to insinuate that you are a ‘grim feature.’ But would it not make a saint ‘grim’ to hear of such preparations for the morning meal? And then to hear of such consummations as *panis siccus*, dry bread; or (if the learned reader thinks it will taste better in Greek), ἄργος ξηρός! And what may this word *dry* happen to mean? ‘Does it mean *stale*?’ says Salmasius. ‘Shall we suppose,’ says he, in querulous words, ‘*mollī et recenti opponi*,’ that it is placed in antithesis to soft and new bread, what English sailors call ‘*soft tommy*?’ and from that antithesis conclude it to be, ‘*dūrum et non recens coctum, eoque sicciorem?*’ Hard and stale, and in that proportion more arid? Not quite so bad as that, we hope. Or again — ‘*siccum pro biscocto, ut hodie vocamus, sumemus?*¹⁰⁰ By *hodiū*

Salmasius means, amongst his countrymen of France, where *biscoctus* is verbatim reproduced in the word *bis* (twice), *cuit* (baked); whence our own *biscuit*. *Biscuit* might do very well, could we be sure that it was cabin biscuit; but Salmasius argues that—in this case he takes it to mean ‘*buccellatum, qui est panis nauticus*;’ that is, the ship company’s biscuit, broken with a sledge-hammer. In Greek, for the benefit again of the learned reader, it is termed *δίπυλος*, indicating that it has passed twice under the action of fire.

‘Well,’ you say, ‘no matter if it had passed through the fires of Moloch; only let us have this biscuit, such as it is.’ In good faith, then, fasting reader, you are not likely to see much more than you *have* seen. It is a very Barmecide feast, we do assure you—this same ‘*jentaculum*;’ at which abstinence and patience are much more exercised than the teeth: faith and hope are the chief graces cultivated, together with that species of the *magnificum* which is founded on the *ignotum*. Even this biscuit was allowed in the most limited quantities; for which reason it is that the Greeks called this apology for a meal by the name of *βούζισμος*, a word formed (as many words were in the Post-Augustan ages) from a Latin word—viz., *buccea*, a mouthful; not literally such, but so much as a polished man could allow himself to put into his mouth at once. ‘We took a mouthful,’ says Sir William Waller, the parliamentary general—‘took a mouthful; paid our reckoning; mounted; and were off.’ But there Sir William means, by his plausible mouthful, something very much beyond either nine or nineteen ordinary quantities of that denomination, whereas the Roman ‘*jentaculum*’ was literally such;

and, accordingly, one of the varieties under which the ancient vocabularies express this model of evanescent quantities is *gustatio*, a mere tasting; and again, it is called by another variety *gustus*, a mere taste [whence comes the old French word *gouster* for a refection or luncheon, and then (by the usual suppression of the s) *gouter*]. Speaking of his uncle, Pliny the Younger says: ‘Post solem plerumque lavabatur: deinde gustabat; dormiebat minimum; mox, quasi alio die, studebat in cœnæ tempus.’ ‘After taking the air, generally speaking, he bathed; after that he broke his fast on a morsel of biscuit, and took a very slight siesta: which done, as if awaking to a new day, he set in regularly to his studies, and pursued them to dinner-time.’ *Gustabat* here meant that nondescript meal which arose at Rome when *jentaculum* and *prandium* were fused into one, and that only a *taste* or mouthful of biscuit, as we shall show farther on.

Possibly, however, most excellent reader, like some epicurean traveller, who, in crossing the Alps, finds himself weather-bound at St. Bernard’s on Ash-Wednesday, you surmise a remedy: you descry some opening from ‘the loopholes of retreat,’ through which a few delicacies might be insinuated to spread verdure on this arid wilderness of biscuit. Casuistry can do much. A dead hand at casuistry has often proved more than a match for Lent with all his quarantines. But sorry I am to say that, in this case, no relief is hinted at in any ancient author. A grape or two (not a bunch of grapes), a raisin or two, a date, an olive—these are the whole amount of relief¹⁰¹ which the chancery of the Roman kitchen granted in such cases. All things here hang together, and prove each other

— the time, the place, the mode, the thing. Well might man eat standing, or eat in public, such a trifle as this. Go home, indeed, to such a breakfast? You would as soon think of ordering a cloth to be laid in order to eat a peach, or of asking a friend to join you in an orange. No man in his senses makes ‘two bites of a cherry.’ So let us pass on to the other stages of the day. Only, in taking leave of this morning’s stage, throw your eyes back with me, Christian reader, upon this truly heathen meal, fit for idolatrous dogs like your Greeks and your Romans; survey, through the vista of ages, that thrice-accursed biscuit, with half a fig, perhaps, by way of garnish, and a huge hammer by its side, to secure the certainty of mastication, by previous comminution. Then turn your eyes to a Christian breakfast — hot rolls, eggs, coffee, beef; but down, down, rebellious visions; we need say no more! You, reader, like myself, will breathe a malediction on the Classical era, and thank your stars for making you a Romanticist. Every morning I thank mine for keeping me back from the Augustan age, and reserving me to a period in which breakfast had been already invented. In the words of Ovid, I say: —

‘*Prisca juvent alios : ego me nunc denique natum
Gratulor. Hæc ætas moribus apta meis.*’

Our friend, the Roman cit, has therefore thus far, in his progress through life, obtained no breakfast, if he ever contemplated an idea so frantic. But it occurs to you, my faithful reader, that perhaps he will not always be thus unhappy. I could bring wagon-loads of sentiments, Greek as well as Roman, which prove, more clearly than the most eminent pikestaff, that, at

the wheel of fortune revolves, simply out of the fact that it has carried a man downwards, it must subsequently carry him upwards, no matter what dislike that wheel, or any of its spokes, may bear to that man: ‘non si male nunc sit, et olim sic erit:’ and that if a man, through the madness of his nation, misses coffee and hot rolls at nine, he may easily run into a leg of mutton at twelve. True it is he may do so: truth is commendable; and I will not deny that a man may sometimes, by losing a breakfast, gain a dinner. Such things have been in various ages, and will be again, but not at Rome. There were reasons against it. We have heard of men who consider life under the idea of a wilderness — dry as a ‘remainder biscuit after a voyage:’ and who consider a day under the idea of a little life. Life is the macrocosm, or world at large; day is the microcosm, or world in miniature. Consequently, if life is a wilderness, then day, as a little life, is a little wilderness. And this wilderness can be safely traversed only by having relays of fountains, or stages for refreshment. Such stages, they conceive, are found in the several meals which Providence has stationed at due intervals through the day, whenever the perverseness of man does not break the chain, or derange the order of succession.

These are the anchors by which man rides in that billowy ocean between morning and night. The first anchor, viz., breakfast, having given way in Rome, the more need there is that he should pull up by the second; and that is often reputed to be dinner. And as your dictionary, good reader, translated *breakfast* by that vain word *jentaculum*, so doubtless it will translate *dinner* by that still vainer word *prandium*. Sincerely

I hope that your own dinner on this day, and through all time coming, may have a better root in fact and substance than this most visionary of all baseless things — the Roman *prandium*, of which I shall presently show you that the most approved translation is *moonshine*.

Reader, I am anything but jesting here. In the very spirit of serious truth, I assure you that the delusion about ‘jentaculum’ is even exceeded by this other delusion about ‘prandium.’ Salmasius himself, for whom a natural prejudice of place and time partially obscured the truth, admits, however, that *prandium* was a meal which the ancients rarely took ; his very words are — ‘*raro prandebant veteres*.’ Now, judge for yourself of the good sense which is shown in translating by the word *dinner*, which must of necessity mean the chief meal, a Roman word which represents a fancy meal, a meal of caprice, a meal which few people took. At this moment, what is the single point of agreement between the noon meal of the English laborer and the evening meal of the English gentleman ? What is the single circumstance common to both, which causes us to denominate them by the common name of *dinner* ? It is, that in both we recognize the *principal* meal of the day, the meal upon which is thrown the *onus* of the day’s support. In everything else they are as wide asunder as the poles ; but they agree in this one point of their function. Is it credible now, that, to represent such a meal amongst ourselves, we select a Roman word so notoriously expressing a mere shadow, a pure apology, that very few people ever tasted it — nobody sat down to it — not many washed their hands after it, and gradually the very name of it

became interchangeable with another name, implying the slightest possible act of tentative tasting or sipping? ‘*Post lavationem sine mensâ prandium*,’ says Seneca, ‘*post quod non sunt lavanda manus*;’ that is, ‘after bathing, I take a *prandium* without sitting down to table, and such a *prandium* as brings after itself no need of washing the hands.’ No; moonshine as little soils the hands as it oppresses the stomach.

Reader! I, as well as Pliny, had an uncle, an East Indian uncle; doubtless you have such an uncle; everybody has an Indian uncle. Generally such a person is ‘rather yellow, rather yellow’ (to quote Canning *versus* Lord Durham), that is the chief fault with his physics; but, as to his morals, he is universally a man of princely aspirations and habits. He is not always so orientally rich as he is reputed; but he is always orientally munificent. Call upon him at any hour from two to five, he insists on your taking *tiffin*: and such a *tiffin*! The English corresponding term is luncheon; but how meagre a shadow is the European meal to its glowing Asiatic cousin! Still, gloriously as *tiffin* shines, does anybody imagine that it is a vicarious dinner, or ever meant to be the substitute and *locum tenens* of dinner? Wait till eight, and you will have your eyes opened on that subject. So of the Roman *prandium*: had it been as luxurious as it was simple, still it was always viewed as something meant only to stay the stomach, as a prologue to something beyond. The *prandium* was far enough from giving the feeblest idea even of the English luncheon; yet it stood in the same relation to the Roman day. Now to Englishmen that meal scarcely exists; and were it not for women, whose delicacy of organization does not allow

them to fast so long as men, would probably be abolished. It is singular in this, as in other points, how nearly England and ancient Rome approximate. We all know how hard it is to tempt a man generally into spoiling his appetite, by eating before dinner. The same dislike of violating what they called the integrity of the appetite (*integram famem*), existed at Rome. *Integer* means what is *intact*, unviolated by touch. Cicero, when protesting against spoiling his appetite for dinner, by tasting anything beforehand, says, *integram famem ad cœnam afferam*; I intend bringing to dinner an appetite untampered with. Nay, so much stress did the Romans lay on maintaining this primitive state of the appetite undisturbed, that any prelusions with either *jentaculum* or *prandium* were said, by a very strong phrase indeed, *polluere famem*, to pollute the sanctity of the appetite. The appetite was regarded as a holy vestal flame, soaring upwards towards dinner throughout the day: if undebauched, it tended to its natural consummation in *cœna*: expiring like a phœnix, to rise again out of its own ashes. On this theory, to which language had accommodated itself, the two preclusive meals of nine or ten o'clock A. M., and of one P. M., so far from being ratified by the public sense, and adopted into the economy of the day, were regarded gloomily as gross irregularities, enormities, debauchers of the natural instinct; and, in so far as they thwarted that instinct, lessened it, or depraved it, were almost uniformly held to be full of pollution; and, finally, to *profane* a sacred motion of nature. Such was the language.

But we guess what is passing in the reader's mind. He thinks that all this proves the *prandium* to have

been a meal of little account ; and in very many cases absolutely unknown. But still he thinks all this might happen to the English dinner — *that* also might be neglected ; supper might be generally preferred ; and, nevertheless, dinner would be as truly entitled to the name of dinner as before. Many a student neglects his dinner ; enthusiasm in any pursuit must often have extinguished appetite for all of us. Many a time and oft did this happen to Sir Isaac Newton. Evidence is on record, that such a deponent at eight o'clock A. M. found Sir Isaac with one stocking on, one off ; at two, said deponent called him to dinner. Being interrogated whether Sir Isaac had pulled on the *minus* stocking, or gartered the *plus* stocking, witness replied that he had not. Being asked if Sir Isaac came to dinner, replied that he did not. Being again asked, ‘At sunset, did you look in on Sir Isaac?’ witness replied, ‘I did.’ ‘And now, upon your conscience, sir, by the virtue of your oath, in what state were the stockings?’ *Ans.* — ‘*In statu quo ante bellum.*’ It seems Sir Isaac had fought through that whole battle of a long day, so trying a campaign to many people — he had traversed that whole sandy Zaarah, without calling, or needing to call, at one of those fountains, stages, or *mansiones*,¹⁰² by which (according to our former explanation) Providence has relieved the continuity of arid soil, which else disfigures that long dreary level. This happens to all ; but was dinner not dinner, and did supper become dinner, because Sir Isaac Newton ate nothing at the first, and drew the whole day’s support upon the last? No, you will say, a rule is not defeated by one casual deviation, nor by one person’s constant deviation

Everybody else was still dining at two, though Sir Isaac might not; and Sir Isaac himself on most days no more deferred his dinner beyond two, than he sat in public with one stocking off. But what if everybody, Sir Isaac included, had deferred his substantial meal until night, and taken a slight refection only at two? The question put does really represent the very case which has happened with us in England. In 1700, a large part of London took a meal at two P. M., and another at seven or eight P. M. At present, a large part of London is still doing the very same thing, taking one meal at two, and another at seven or eight. But the names are entirely changed: the two o'clock meal used to be called *dinner*, whereas at present it is called *luncheon*; the seven o'clock meal used to be called *supper*, whereas at present it is called *dinner*, and in both cases the difference is anything but *verbal*: it expresses a translation of that main meal, on which the day's support rested, from mid-day to evening.

Upon reviewing the idea of dinner, we soon perceive that time has little or no connection with it: since, both in England and France, dinner has travelled, like the hand of a clock, through *every* hour between ten A. M. and ten P. M. We have a list, well attested, of every successive hour between these limits having been the known established hour for the royal dinner-table within the last three hundred and fifty years. Time, therefore, vanishes from the problem; it is a quantity regularly exterminated. The true elements of the idea are evidently these:— 1. That dinner is that meal, no matter when taken, which is the principal meal; *i. e.*, the meal on which the day's support is

thrown. 2. That it is *therefore* the meal of hospitality
3. That it is the meal (with reference to both Nos. 1 and 2) in which animal food predominate. 4. That it is that meal which, upon a necessity arising for the abolition of all *but* one, would naturally offer itself as that one. Apply these four tests to *prandium*:— How could that meal *prandium* answer to the first test, as *the day's support*, which few people touched? How could that meal *prandium* answer to the second test, as the *meal of hospitality*, at which nobody sat down? How could that meal *prandium* answer to the third test, as the meal of animal food, which consisted exclusively and notoriously of bread? Or answer to the fourth test, as the privileged meal *entitled to survive the abolition of the rest*, which was itself abolished at all times in practice?

Tried, therefore, by every test, *prandium* vanishes. But I have something further to communicate about this same *prandium*.

1. It came to pass, by a very natural association of feeling, that *prandium* and *jentaculum*, in the latter centuries of Rome, were generally confounded. This result was inevitable. Both professed the same basis. Both came in the morning. Both were fictions. Hence they melted and collapsed into each other.

That fact speaks for itself — the modern breakfast and luncheon never could have been confounded; but who would be at the pains of distinguishing two shadows? In a gambling-house of that class, where you are at liberty to sit down to a splendid banquet, anxiety probably prevents your sitting down at all but, if you do, the same cause prevents you noticing what you eat. So of the two *pseudo* meals of Rome,

they came in the very midst of the Roman business — viz., from nine A. M. to two P. M. Nobody could give his mind to them, had they been of better quality. There lay one cause of their vagueness — viz., in their position. Another cause was, the common basis of both. Bread was so notoriously the predominating ‘feature’ in each of these prelusive banquets, that all foreigners at Rome, who communicated with Romans through the Greek language, knew both the one and the other by the name of *αρτοσιτος*, or the *bread repast*. Originally, this name had been restricted to the earlier meal. But a distinction without a difference could not sustain itself; and both alike disguised their emptiness under this pompous quadrisyllable. All words are suspicious, there is an odor of fraud about them, which — being concerned with common things — are so base as to stretch out to four syllables. What does an honest word want with more than two? In the identity of substance, therefore, lay a second ground of confusion. And then, thirdly, even as to the time, which had ever been the sole real distinction, there arose from accident a tendency to converge. For it happened that, while some had *jentaculum* but no *prandium*, others had *prandium* but no *jentaculum*; a third party had both; a fourth party, by much the largest, had neither. Out of which four varieties (who would think that a non-entity could cut up into so many somethings?) arose a fifth party of compromisers, who, because they could not afford a regular *cæna*, and yet were hospitably disposed, fused the two ideas into one; and so, because the usual time for the idea of a breakfast was nine to ten, and for the idea of a luncheon twelve to one, compromised the rival pretensions by what diplomatists

call a *mezzo termine*; bisecting the time at eleven, and melting the two ideas into one. But, by thus merging the separate times of each, they abolished the sole real difference that had ever divided them. Losing that, they lost all.

Perhaps, as two negatives make one affirmative, it may be thought that two layers of moonshine might coalesce into one pancake; and two Barmecide banquets might be the square root of one poached egg. Of that the company were the best judges. But, probably, as a rump and dozen, in our land of wagers, is construed with a very liberal latitude as to the materials, so Martial's invitation, 'to take bread with him at eleven,' might be understood by the *oīvētōi* (the knowing ones) as significant of something better than *ἀρτοποτής*. Otherwise, in good truth, 'moonshine and turn-out' at eleven A. M. would be even worse than 'tea and turn-out' at eight P. M., which the 'fervida juventus' of Young England so loudly deprecates. But, however that might be, in this convergement of the several frontiers, and the confusion that ensued, one cannot wonder that, whilst the two bladders collapsed into one idea, they actually expanded into four names — two Latin and two Greek, *gustus* and *gustatio*, *γεῦσις* and *γεύσμα* — which all alike express the merely tentative or exploratory act of a *prægustator* or professional 'taster' in a king's household: what, if applied to a fluid, we should denominate sipping.

At last, by so many steps all in one direction, things had come to such a pass — the two prelusive meals of the Roman morning, each for itself separately vague from the beginning, had so communicated and inter-fused their several and joint vaguenesses, that at las-

no man knew or cared to know what any other man included in his idea of either; how much or how little. And you might as well have hunted in the woods of Ethiopia for Prester John, or fixed the parish of the Everlasting Jew,¹⁰³ as have attempted to say what ‘jen-taculum’ certainly *was*, or what ‘prandium’ certainly was *not*. Only one thing was clear, that neither was anything that people cared for. They were both empty shadows; but shadows as they were, we find from Cicero that they had a power of polluting and profaning better things than themselves.

We presume that no rational man will henceforth look for ‘dinner’ — that great idea according to Dr. Johnson — that sacred idea according to Cicero — in a bag of moonshine on one side, or a bag of pollution on the other. *Prandium*, so far from being what our foolish dictionaries pretend — dinner itself — never in its palmiest days was more or other than a miserable attempt at being *luncheon*. It was a *conatus*, what physiologists call a *nusus*, a struggle in a very ambitious spark, or *scintilla*, to kindle into a fire. This *nusus* went on for some centuries; but finally vaporized in smoke. If *prandium* had worked out its ambition, had ‘the great stream of tendency’ accomplished all its purposes, *prandium* never could have been more than a very indifferent luncheon. But now,

2. I have to offer another fact, ruinous to our dictionaries on another ground. Various circumstances have disguised the truth, but a truth it is, that ‘prandium,’ in its very origin and *incunabula*, never was a meal known to the Roman *culina*. In that court it was never recognized except as an alien. It had no

original domicile in the city of Rome. It was a *vox castrensis*, a word and an idea purely martial, and pointing to martial necessities. Amongst the new ideas proclaimed to the recruit, this was one — ‘Look for no “*cæna*,” no regular dinner, with us. Resign these unwarlike notions. It is true that even war has its respites; in these it would be possible to have our Roman *cæna* with all its equipage of ministrations. But luxury untunes the mind for doing and suffering. Let us voluntarily renounce it; that, when a necessity of renouncing it arrives, we may not feel it among the hardships of war. From the day when you enter the gates of the camp, reconcile yourself, tiro, to a new fashion of meal, to what in camp dialect we call *prandium*.’ This *prandium*, this essentially military meal, was taken standing, by way of symbolizing the necessity of being always ready for the enemy. Hence the posture in which it was taken at Rome, the very counter-pole to the luxurious posture of dinner. A writer of the third century, a period from which the Romans naturally looked back upon everything connected with their own early habits, with much the same kind of interest as we extend to our Alfred (separated from us, as Romulus from them, by just a thousand years), in speaking of *prandium*, says, ‘Quod dictum est *parandum*, ab eo quod milites ad bellum *varet*.’ Isidorus again says, ‘Proprie apud veteres *prandium* vocatum fuisse omnem militum cibum ante *bugnam*:’ i. e., ‘that, properly speaking, amongst our ancestors every military meal taken before battle was termed *prandium*.’ According to Isidore, the proposition is reciprocating; viz., that, as every *prandium* was a military meal, so every military meal was called

prandium. But, in fact, the reason of that is apparent. Whether in the camp or the city, the early Romans had probably but one meal in a day. That is true of many a man amongst ourselves by choice ; it is true also, to our knowledge, of some horse regiments in our service, and may be of all. This meal was called *cæna*, or dinner in the city — *prandium* in camps. In the city, it would always be tending to one fixed hour. In the camp, innumerable accidents of war would make it very uncertain. On this account it would be an established rule to celebrate the daily meal at noon, if nothing hindered ; not that a later hour would not have been preferred, had the choice been free ; but it was better to have a certainty at a bad hour, than by waiting for a better hour to make it an uncertainty. For it was a camp proverb — *Pransus, paratus* ; armed with his daily meal, the soldier is ready for service. It was not, however, that all meals, as Isidore imagined, were indiscriminately called *prandium* ; but that the one sole meal of the day, by accidents of war, might, and did, revolve through all hours of the day.

The first introduction of this military meal into Rome itself would be through the honorable pedantry of old centurions, &c., delighting (like the Commodore Trunnions of our navy) to keep up in peaceful life some image or memorial of their past experience, so wild, so full of peril, excitement, and romance, as Roman warfare must have been in those ages. Many non-military people for health's sake, many as an excuse for eating early, many by way of interposing some refreshment between the stages of forensic business, would adopt this hurried and informal meal. Many would wish to see their sons adopting such a

meal, as a training for foreign service in particular, and for temperance in general. It would also be maintained by a solemn and very interesting commemoration of this camp repast in Rome.

This commemoration, because it has been grossly misunderstood by Salmasius (whose error arose from not marking the true point of a particular antithesis), and still more, because it is a distinct confirmation of all I have said as to the military nature of *prandium*, I shall detach from the series of my illustrations, by placing it in a separate paragraph.

On a set day the officers of the army were invited by Cæsar to a banquet; it was a circumstance expressly noticed in the invitation, that the banquet was not a ‘cœna,’ but a ‘prandium.’ What did *that* imply? Why, that all the guests must present themselves in full military accoutrement; whereas, observes the historian, had it been a *cœna*, the officers would have unbelted their swords; for he adds, even in Cæsar’s presence the officers are allowed to lay aside their swords. The word *prandium*, in short, converted the palace into the imperial tent; and Cæsar was no longer a civil emperor and *princeps senatus*, but became a commander-in-chief amongst a council of his staff, all belted and plumed, and in full military fig.

On this principle we come to understand why it is, that, whenever the Latin poets speak of an army as taking food, the word used is always *prandens* and *pransus*; and when the word used is *prandens*, there always it is an army that is concerned. Thus Juvenal in a well-known passage:—

‘Credimus altos
Desiccasse amnes, epotaque flumina, Medo
Prandente’ —

that rivers were drunk up, when the Mede [*i. e.*, the Median army under Xerxes] took his daily meal: *prandente*, observe, not *cænante*: you might as well talk of an army taking tea and buttered toast, as taking *cæna*. Nor is that word ever applied to armies. It is true that the converse is not so rigorously observed, nor ought it, from the explanations already given. Though no soldier dined (*cænabat*), yet the citizen sometimes adopted the camp usage, and took a *prandium*. But generally the poets use the word merely to mark the time of day. In that most humorous appeal of Perseus — ‘*Cur quis non prandeat, hoc est?*’ — is this a sufficient reason for losing one’s *prandium*? — he was obliged to say *prandium*, because no exhibitions ever could cause a man to lose his *cæna*, since none were displayed at a time of day when nobody in Rome would have attended. Just as, in alluding to a parliamentary speech notoriously delivered at midnight, an English satirist might have said, Is this a speech to furnish an argument for leaving one’s bed? — not as what stood foremost in his regard, but as the only thing that *could* be lost at that time of night.

On this principle, also — viz. by going back to the military origin of *prandium* — we gain the interpretation of all the peculiarities attached to it: viz. — 1, its early hour; 2, its being taken in a standing posture; 3, in the open air; 4, the humble quality of its materials — bread and biscuit (the main articles of military fare). In all these circumstances of the meal, we read most legibly written, the exotic (or non-civic) character of the meal, and its martial character.

Thus I have brought down our Roman friend to noonday, or even one hour later than noon, and to

this moment the poor man has had nothing to eat. For supposing him to be not *impransus*, and supposing him *jentasse* beside; yet it is evident (I hope) that neither one nor the other means more than what it was often called — viz., *βεκκιομός*, or, in plain English, a mouthful. How long do we intend to keep him waiting? Reader, he will dine at three, or (supposing dinner put off to the latest) at four. Dinner was never known to be later than the tenth hour at Rome, which in summer would be past five; but for a far greater proportion of days would be near four in Rome. And so entirely was a Roman the creature of ceremonial usage, that a national mourning would probably have been celebrated, and the ‘sad augurs’ would have been called in to expiate the prodigy, had the general dinner lingered beyond four.

But, meantime, what has our friend been about since perhaps six or seven in the morning? After paying his little homage to his *patronus*, in what way has he fought with the great enemy Time since then? Why, reader, this illustrates one of the most interesting features in the Roman character. The Roman was the ‘idlest of men.’ ‘Man and boy,’ he was ‘an idler in the land.’ He called himself and his pals, ‘*rerum dominos, gentemque togatam*’ — ‘the gentry that wore the toga.’ Yes, a pretty set of *gentry* they were, and a pretty affair that ‘toga’ was. Just figure to yourself, reader, the picture of a hard-working man, with horny hands, like our hedgers, ditchers, porters, &c., setting to work on the high road in that vast sweeping toga, filling with a strong gale like the mainsail of a frigate. Conceive the roars with which this magnificent figure would be received into the bosom of

modern poor-house detachment sent out to attack the stones on some line of road, or a fatigue party of dust-men sent upon secret service. Had there been nothing left as a memorial of the Romans but that one relic—their immeasurable *toga*¹⁰⁴—I should have known that they were born and bred to idleness. In fact, except in war, the Roman never did anything at all but sun himself. *Uti se apricaret* was the final cause of peace in his opinion; in literal truth, that he might make an *apricot* of himself. The public rations at all times supported the poorest inhabitant of Rome if he were a citizen. Hence it was that Hadrian was so astonished with the spectacle of Alexandria, ‘*civitas opulenta, fœcunda, in quâ nemo vivat otiosus.*’ Here first he saw the spectacle of a vast city, second only to Rome, where every man had something to do; *podagrosi quod agant habent; habent cæci quod faciant; ne chiragrici*’ (those with gout in the fingers) ‘*apud eos otiosi virunt.*’ No poor rates levied upon the rest of the world for the benefit of their own paupers were there distributed *gratis*. The prodigious spectacle (such it seemed to Hadrian) was exhibited in Alexandria, of all men earning their bread in the sweat of their brow. In Rome only (and at one time in some of the Grecian states), it was the very meaning of *citizen* that he should vote and be idle. Precisely those were the two things which the Roman, the *fœx Romuli* had to do—viz., sometimes to vote, and always to be idle.

In these circumstances, where the whole sum of life’s duties amounted to voting, all the business a man could have was to attend the public assemblies, electioneering or factious. These, and any judicial

trial (public or private) that might happen to interest him for the persons concerned, or for the questions at stake, amused him through the morning ; that is, from eight till one. He might also extract some diversion from the *columnæ*, or pillars of certain porticoes to which they pasted advertisements. These *affiches* must have been numerous ; for all the girls in Rome who lost a trinket, or a pet bird, or a lap-dog, took this mode of angling in the great ocean of the public for the missing articles.

But all this time I take for granted that there were no shows in a course of exhibition, either the dreadful ones of the amphitheatre, or the bloodless ones of the circus. If there were, then that became the business of all Romans ; and it was a business which would have occupied him from daylight until the light began to fail. Here we see another effect from the scarcity of artificial light amongst the ancients. These magnificent shows went on by daylight. But how incomparably more gorgeous would have been the splendor by lamp-light ! What a gigantic conception ! Two hundred and fifty thousand human faces all revealed under one blaze of lamp-light ! Lord Bacon saw the mighty advantage of candle-light for the pomps and glories of this world. But the poverty of the earth was the original cause that the Pagan shows proceeded by day. Not that the masters of the world, who rained Arabian odors and perfumed waters of the most costly description from a thousand fountains, simply to cool the summer heats, would, in the latter centuries of Roman civilization, have regarded the expense of light ; cedar and other odorous woods burning upon vast altars, together with every variety of fragran-

torch, would have created light enough to shed a new day stretching over to the distant Adriatic. But precedents derived from early ages of poverty, ancient traditions, overruled the practical usage.

However, as there may happen to be no public spectacles, and the courts of political meetings (if not closed altogether by superstition) would at any rate be closed in the ordinary course by twelve or one o'clock, nothing remains for him to do, before returning home, except perhaps to attend the *palæstra*, or some public recitation of a poem written by a friend, but in any case to attend the public baths. For these the time varied; and many people have thought it tyrannical in some of the Cæsars that they imposed restraints on the time open for the baths; some, for instance, would not suffer them to open at all before two; and in any case, if you were later than four or five in summer, you would have to pay a fine, which most effectually cleaned out the baths of all raff, since it was a sum that *John Quires* could not have produced to save his life. But it should be considered that the emperor was the steward of the public resources for maintaining the baths in fuel, oil, attendance, repairs. And certain it is, that during the long peace of the first Cæsars, and after the *annonaria provisio* (that great pledge of popularity to a Roman prince) had been increased by the corn tribute from the Nile, the Roman population took a vast expansion ahead. The subsequent increase of baths, whilst no old ones were neglected, proves that decisively. And as citizenship expanded by means of the easy terms on which it could be had, so did the bathers multiply. The population of Rome in the century after Augustus, was far

greater than during that era ; and this, still acting ~~a~~ a vortex to the rest of the world, may have been one great motive with Constantine for translating the capital eastwards ; in reality, for breaking up one monster capital into two of more manageable dimensions. Two o'clock was sometimes the earliest hour at which the public baths were opened. But in Martial's time a man could go without blushing (*salvā fronte*) at eleven ; though even then two o'clock was the meridian hour for the great uproar of splashing, and swimming, and 'larking' in the endless baths of endless Rome.

And now, at last, bathing finished, and the exercises of the *palæstra*, at half-past two, or three, our friend finds his way home — not again to leave it for that day. He is now a new man ; refreshed, oiled with perfumes, his dust washed off by hot water, and ready for enjoyment. These were the things that determined the time for dinner. Had there been no other proof that *cæna* was the Roman dinner, this is an ample one. Now first the Roman was fit for dinner, in a condition of luxurious ease ; business over — that day's load of anxiety laid aside — his *cuticle*, as he delighted to talk, cleansed and polished — nothing more to do or to think of until the next morning : he might now go and dine, and get drunk with a safe conscience. Besides, if he does not get dinner now, when will he get it ? For most demonstrably he has taken nothing yet which comes near in value to that basin of soup which many of ourselves take at the Roman hour of bathing. No ; we have kept our man fasting as yet. It is to be hoped, that something is coming at last.

Yes, something *is* coming ; dinner is coming, the great meal of '*cæna*' ; the meal sacred to hospitality

and genial pleasure comes now to fill up the rest of the day, until light fails altogether.

Many people are of opinion that the Romans only understood what the capabilities of dinner were. It is certain that they were the first great people that discovered the true secret and meaning of dinner, the great office which it fulfils, and which we in England are now so generally acting on. Barbarous nations — and none were, in that respect, more barbarous than our own ancestors — made this capital blunder: the brutes, if you asked them what was the use of dinner, what it was meant for, stared at you, and replied — as a horse would reply, if you put the same question about his provender — that it was to give him strength for finishing his work! Therefore, if you point your telescope back to antiquity about twelve or one o'clock in the daytime, you will descry our most worthy ancestors all eating for their very lives, eating as dogs eat — viz., in bodily fear that some other dog will come and take their dinner away. What swelling of the veins in the temples (see Boswell's natural history of Dr. Johnson at dinner)! what intense and rapid deglutition! what odious clatter of knives and plates! what silence of the human voice! what gravity! what fury in the libidinous eyes with which they contemplate the dishes! Positively it was an *indecent* spectacle to see Dr. Johnson at dinner. But, above all, what maniacal haste and hurry, as if the fiend were waiting with red-hot pincers to lay hold of the hindmost!

Oh, reader, do you recognize in this abominable picture your respected ancestors and ours? Excuse me for saying, 'What monsters!' I have a right to

call my own ancestors monsters ; and, if so, I must have the same right over yours. For Southey has shown plainly in the ‘ Doctor,’ that every man having four grandparents in the second stage of ascent, consequently (since each of those four will have had four grandparents) sixteen in the third stage, consequently sixty-four in the fourth, consequently two hundred and fifty-six in the fifth, and so on, it follows that, long before you get to the Conquest, every man and woman then living in England will be wanted to make up the sum of my separate ancestors ; consequently you must take your ancestors out of the very same fund, or (if you are too proud for that) you must go without ancestors. So that, your ancestors being clearly mine, I have a right in law to call the whole ‘ kit ’ of them monsters. *Quod erat demonstrandum.* Really and upon my honor, it makes one, for the moment, ashamed of one’s descent ; one would wish to disinherit one’s-self backwards, and (as Sheridan says in the ‘ Rivals ’) to ‘ cut the connection.’ Wordsworth* has an admirable picture in ‘ Peter Bell ’ of ‘ a snug party in a parlor ’ removed into *limbus patrum* for their offences in the flesh : —

‘ Cramming as they on earth were cramm’d
All sipping wine, all sipping tea ;
But, as you by their faces see,
All silent, and all d——d.’

How well does that one word *silent* describe those venerable ancestral dinners — ‘ All silent ! ’ Contrast this infernal silence of voice, and fury of eye, with the *risus ambilis*, the festivity, the social kindness, the music, the wine, the ‘ *dulcis insania*,’ of a Roman *cena.*’ I mentioned four tests for determining what

* [By a wicked slip for Shelley.]

meal is, and what is not, dinner: we may now add a fifth — viz., the spirit of festal joy and elegant enjoyment, of anxiety laid aside, and of honorable social pleasure put on like a marriage garment.

And what caused the difference between our ancestors and the Romans? Simply this — the error of interposing dinner in the middle of business, thus court-ing all the breezes of angry feeling that may happen to blow from the business yet to come, instead of finishing, absolutely closing, the account with this world's troubles before you sit down. That unhappy interpolation ruined all. Dinner was an ugly little parenthesis between two still uglier clauses of a tee-totally ugly sentence. Whereas, with us, their enlightened posterity, to whom they have the honor to be ancestors, dinner is a great re-action. There lies *my* conception of the matter. It grew out of the very excess of the evil. When business was moderate, dinner was allowed to divide and bisect it. When it swelled into that vast strife and agony, as one may call it, that boils along the tortured streets of modern London or other capitals, men begin to see the necessity of an adequate counter-force to push against this overwhelming torrent, and thus maintain the equilibrium. Were it not for the soft relief of a six o'clock dinner, the gentle demeanor succeeding to the boisterous hubbub of the day, the soft glowing lights, the wine, the intellectual conversation, life in London is now come to such a pass, that in two years all nerves would sink before it. But for this periodic re-action, the modern business which draws so cruelly on the brain, and so little on the hands, would overthrow that organ in all but those of coarse organization. Dinner it is

meaning by dinner the whole complexity of attendant circumstances — which saves the modern brain-working man from going mad.

This revolution as to dinner was the greatest in virtue and value ever accomplished. In fact, those are always the most operative revolutions which are brought about through social or domestic changes. A nation must be barbarous, neither could it have much intellectual business, which dined in the morning. They could not be at ease in the morning. So much *must* be granted: every day has its separate *quantum*, its dose of anxiety, that could not be digested as soon noon. No man will say it. He, therefore, who dined at noon, showed himself willing to sit down squalid as he was, with his dress unchanged, his cares not washed off. And what follows from that? Why, that to him, to such a canine or cynical specimen of the genus *homo*, dinner existed only as a physical event, a mere animal relief, a purely carnal enjoyment. For in what, I demand, did this fleshly creature differ from the carrion crow, or the kite, or the vulture, or the cormorant? A French judge, in an action upon a wager, laid it down as law, that man only had a *bouche*, all other animals a *gueule*: only with regard to the horse, in consideration of his beauty, nobility, use, and in honor of the respect with which man regarded him, by the courtesy of Christendom, he might be allowed to have a *bouche*, and his reproach of brutality, if not taken away, might thus be hidden. But surely, of the rabid animal who is caught dining at noonday, the *homo ferus*, who affronts the meridian sun like Thyestes and Atreus, by his inhuman meals, we are by parity of reason, entitled to say, that he has a ‘naw

(so has Milton's Death), but nothing resembling a stomach. And to this vile man a philosopher would say — ‘Go away, sir, and come back to me two or three centuries hence, when you have learned to be a reasonable creature, and to make that physico-intellectual thing out of dinner which it was meant to be, and is capable of becoming.’ In Henry VII.’s time the court dined at eleven in the forenoon. But even that hour was considered so shockingly late in the French court, that Louis XII. actually had his gray hairs brought down with sorrow to the grave, by changing his regular hour of half-past nine for eleven, in gallantry to his young English bride.¹⁰⁵ He fell a victim to late hours in the forenoon. In Cromwell’s time they dined at one P. M. One century and a half had carried them on by two hours. Doubtless, old cooks and scullions wondered what the world would come to next. Our French neighbors were in the same predicament. But they far surpassed us in veneration for the meal. They actually dated from it. Dinner constituted the great era of the day. *L’apres diner* is almost the sole date which you find in Cardinal De Retz’s memoirs of the *Fronde*. Dinner was their *Hegira* — dinner was their *line* in traversing the ocean of day : they crossed the equator when they dined. Our English Revolution came next ; it made some little difference, I have heard people say, in church and state ; I dare-say it did, like enough, but its great effects were perceived in dinner. People now dine at two. So dined Addison for his last thirty years ; so, through his entire life, dined Pope, whose birth was coeval with the Revolution. Precisely as the Rebellion of 1745 arose, did people (but observe, very great

people) advance to four p. m. Philosophers, who watch the ‘semina rerum,’ and the first symptoms of change, had perceived this alteration singing in the upper air like a coming storm some little time before. About the year 1740, Pope complains of Lady Suffolk’s dining so late as four. Young people may bear those things, he observed; but as to himself, now turned of fifty, if such things went on, if Lady Suffolk would adopt such strange hours, he must really absent himself from Marble Hill. Lady Suffolk had a right to please herself; he himself loved her. But, if she would persist, all which remained for a decayed poet was respectfully to cut his stick, and retire. Whether Pope ever put up with four o’clock dinners again, I have vainly sought to fathom. Some things advance continuously, like a flood or a fire, which always make an end of A, eat and digest it, before they go on to B. Other things advance *per saltum* — they do not silently cancer their way onwards, but lie as still as a snake after they have made some notable conquest, then, when unobserved, they make themselves up ‘for mischief,’ and take a flying bound onwards. Thus advanced Dinner, and by these fits got into the territory of evening. And ever as it made a motion onwards, it found the nation more civilized (else the change could not have been effected), and co-operated in raising them to a still higher civilization. The next relay on that line of road, the next repeating frigate, is Cowper in his poem on ‘Conversation.’ He speaks of four o’clock as still the elegant hour for dinner — the hour for the *lautiores* and the *lepidi homines*. Now this might be written about 1780, or a little earlier; perhaps, therefore, just one generation after

Pope's Lady Suffolk. But then Cowper was living amongst the rural gentry, not in high life; yet, again, Cowper was nearly connected by blood with the eminent Whig house of Cowper, and acknowledged as a kinsman. About twenty-five years after this, we may take Oxford as a good exponent of the national advance. As a magnificent body of 'foundations,' endowed by kings, nursed by queens, and resorted to by the flower of the national youth, Oxford ought to be elegant and even splendid in her habits. Yet, on the other hand, as a grave seat of learning, and feeling the weight of her position in the commonwealth, she is slow to move; she is inert as she should be, having the functions of *resistance* assigned to her against the popular instinct (surely active enough) of *movement*. Now, in Oxford, about 1804-5, there was a general move in the dinner hour. Those colleges who dined at three, of which there were still several, now began to dine at four: those who had dined at four, now translated their hour to five. These continued good general hours till about Waterloo. After that era, six, which had been somewhat of a gala hour, was promoted to the fixed station of dinner-time in ordinary; and there perhaps it will rest through centuries. For a more festal dinner, seven, eight, nine, ten, have all been in requisition since then; but I am not aware of any man's habitually dining later than ten P. M., except in that classical case recorded by Mr. Joseph Miller, of an Irishman who must have dined much later than ten, because his servant protested when others were enforcing the dignity of their masters by the lateness of their dinner hours, that *his* master invariably dined 'to-morrow.'

Were the Romans not as barbarous as our own ancestors at one time? Most certainly they were; in their primitive ages they took their *cæna* at noon,¹⁰⁴ *that* was before they had laid aside their barbarism; before they shaved; it was during their barbarism, and in consequence of their barbarism, that they timed their *cæna* thus unseasonably. And this is made evident by the fact, that, so long as they erred in the hour, they erred in the attending circumstances. At this period they had no music at dinner, no festal graces, and no reposing on sofas. They sat bolt upright in chairs, and were as grave as our ancestors, as rabid, as libidinous in ogling the dishes, and doubtless as furiously in haste.

With us the revolution has been equally complex. We do not, indeed, adopt the luxurious attitude of semi-recumbency; our climate makes that less requisite; and, moreover, the Romans had no knives and forks, which could scarcely be used in that recumbent posture; they ate with their fingers from dishes already cut up—whence the peculiar force of Seneca's ‘*post quod non sunt lavandæ manus.*’ But, exactly in proportion as our dinner has advanced towards evening, have we and has *that* advanced in circumstances of elegance, of taste, of intellectual value. This by itself would be much. Infinite would be the gain for any people, that it had ceased to be brutal, animal, fleshly; ceased to regard the chief meal of the day as a ministration only to an animal necessity; that they had raised it to a higher office; associated it with social and humanizing feelings, with manners, with graces moral and intellectual: moral in the self-restraint; intellectual in the fact, notorious to all men, that the chief arenas for the

savoy display of intellectual power are at our dinner tables. But dinner has *now* even a greater function than this; as the fervor of our day's business increases, dinner is continually more needed in its office of a great *re-action*. I repeat that, at this moment, but for the daily relief of dinner, the brain of all men who mix in the strife of capitals would be unhinged and thrown off its centre.

If we should suppose the case of a nation taking three equidistant meals, all of the same material and the same quantity — all milk, for instance, all bread, or all rice — it would be impossible for Thomas Aquinas himself to say which was or was not dinner. The case would be that of the Roman *ancile* which dropped from the skies; to prevent its ever being stolen, the priests made eleven *fac-similes* of it, in order that a thief, seeing the hopelessness of distinguishing the true one, might let all alone. And the result was, that, in the next generation, nobody could point to the true one. But our dinner, the Roman *cæna*, is distinguished from the rest by far more than the hour; it is distinguished by great functions, and by still greater capacities. It is already most beneficial; if it saves (as I say it does) the nation from madness, it may become more so.

In saying this, I point to the lighter graces of music, and conversation *more varied*, by which the Roman *cæna* was chiefly distinguished from our dinner. I am far from agreeing with Mr. Croly, that the Roman meal was more 'intellectual' than ours. On the contrary, ours is the more intellectual by much; we have far greater knowledge, far greater means for making it such. In fact, the fault of our meal is — that it is *too*

intellectual ; of too severe a character ; too political ; too much tending, in many hands, to disquisition. Reciprocation of question and answer, variety of topics, shifting of topics, are points not sufficiently cultivated. In all else I assent to the following passage from Mr. Croly's eloquent 'Salathiel : —

' If an ancient Roman could start from his slumber into the midst of European life, he must look with scorn on its absence of grace, elegance, and fancy. But it is in its festivity, and most of all in its banquets, that he would feel the incurable barbarism of the Gothic blood. Contrasted with the fine displays that made the table of the Roman noble a picture, and threw over the indulgence of appetite the colors of the imagination, with what eyes must he contemplate the tasteless and commonplace dress, the coarse attendants, the meagre ornament, the want of mirth, music, and intellectual interest — the whole heavy machinery that converts the feast into the mere drudgery of devouring ! '

Thus far the reader knows already that I dissent violently ; and by looking back he will see a picture of our ancestors at dinner, in which they rehearse the very part in relation to ourselves, that Mr. Croly supposes all moderns to rehearse in relation to the Romans ; but in the rest of the beautiful description, the positive, though not the comparative part, we must all concur : —

' The guests before me were fifty or sixty splendidly dressed men ' (they were in fact Titus and his staff, then occupied with the siege of Jerusalem), ' attended by a crowd of domestics, attired with scarcely less splendor ; for no man thought of coming to the ban-

quet in the robes of ordinary life. The embroidered couches, themselves striking objects, allowed the ease of position at once delightful in the relaxing climates of the south, and capable of combining with every grace of the human figure. At a slight distance, the table loaded with plate glittering under a profusion of lamps, and surrounded by couches thus covered by rich draperies, was like a central source of light radiating in broad shafts of every brilliant hue. The wealth of the patricians, and their intercourse with the Greeks, made them masters of the first performances of the arts. Copies of the most famous statues, and groups of sculpture in the precious metals; trophies of victories; models of temples, were mingled with vases of flowers and lighted perfumes. Finally, covering and closing all, was a vast scarlet canopy, which combined the groups beneath to the eye, and threw the whole into the form that a painter would love.'

Mr. Croly then goes on to insist on the intellectual embellishments of the Roman dinner; their variety, their grace, their adaptation to a festive purpose. The truth is, our English imagination, more profound than the Roman, is also more gloomy, less gay, less *riante*. That accounts for our want of the gorgeous *triclinium*, with its scarlet draperies, and for many other differences both to the eye and to the understanding. But both we and the Romans agree in the main point: we both discovered the true purpose which dinner might serve—1, to throw the grace of intellectual enjoyment over an animal necessity; 2, to relieve and to meet by a benign antagonism the toil of brain incident to high forms of social life.

My object has been to point the eye to this fact; w

show uses imperfectly suspected in a recurring accident of life ; to show a steady tendency to that consummation, by holding up, as in a mirror, a series of changes, corresponding to our own series with regard to the same chief meal, silently going on in a great people of antiquity.

TOILETTE OF THE HEBREW LADY.

EXHIBITED IN SIX SCENES.

To the Editor of a great Literary Journal.

SIR,— Some years ago you published a translation of Böttiger's *Sabina*, a learned account of the Roman toilette. I here send you a companion to that work,— not a direct translation, but a very minute abstract [weeded of that wordiness which has made the original unreadable, and therefore unread] from a similar dissertation by Hartmann on the toilette and the wardrobe of the ladies of ancient Palestine. Hartmann was a respectable Oriental scholar, and he published his researches, which occupy three thick octavos, making in all one thousand four hundred and eighty-eight pages, under the title of *Die Hebräerin am Putztische und als Braut*, Amsterdam, 1809 (*The Hebrew Woman at her Toilette, and in her Bridal Character*). I understand that the poor man is now gone to Hades, where, let us hope, that it is considered by Minos or Rhadamanthus no crime in a learned man to be exceedingly tedious, and to repeat the same thing ten times over, or even, upon occasion, fifteen times, provided that his own upright heart should incline him to think that course the most advisable. Certainly Mr. Hartmann has the most excellent gifts at verbal expansion, and talents the most splendid for tautology, that ever

came within my knowledge; and I have found no particular difficulty in compressing every tittle of what relates to his subject into a compass which, I imagine, will fill about one-twenty-eighth part at the utmost of the original work.

It was not to be expected, with the scanty materials before him, that an illustrator of the Hebrew costume should be as full and explicit as Böttiger, with the advantage of writing upon a theme more familiar to us Europeans of this day than any parallel theme even in our own national archæologies of two centuries back. United, however, with his great reading, this barrenness of the subject is so far an advantage for Hartmann, as it yields a strong presumption that he has exhausted it. The male costume of ancient Palestine is yet to be illustrated; but for the female, it is probable that little could be added to what Hartmann has collected;* and that any clever dress-maker would, with the indications here given, enable any lady at the next great masquerade in London to sup-

* It is one great advantage to the illustrator of ancient costume, that when almost everything in this sort of usages was fixed and determined either by religion and state policy (as with the Jews), or by state policy alone (as with the Romans), or by superstition and by settled climate (as with both); and when there was no stimulation to vanity in the love of change from an inventive condition of art and manufacturing skill, and where the system and interests of the government relied for no part of its power on such a condition, dress was stationary for ages, both as to materials and fashion; Rebecca, the Bedouin, was dressed pretty nearly as Mariamne, the wife of Herod, in the age of the Cæsars. And thus the labors of a learned investigator for one age are valid for many which follow and precede

port the part of one of the ancient daughters of Palestine, and to call back, after eighteen centuries of sleep, the buried pomps of Jerusalem. As to the *talking*, there would be no difficulty at all in that point; bishops and other "sacred" people, if they ever go masquing, for their own sakes will not be likely to betray themselves by putting impertinent questions in Hebrew; and for "profane" people like myself, who might like the impertinence, they would very much dislike the Hebrew; indeed, of uncircumcised Hebrews, barring always the clergy, it is not thought that any are extant. In other respects, and as a *spectacle*, the Hebrew masque would infallibly eclipse every other in the room. The upper and under chemise, if managed properly (and either you or I, Mr. Editor, will be most proud to communicate our private advice on that subject without fee or *pot-de-vin*, as the French style a bribe), would transcend, in gorgeous display, the coronation robes of queens; nose-pendants would cause the masque to be immediately and unerringly recognized; or if those were not thought advisable, the silver ankle-bells, with their melodious chimes — the sandals with their jewelled network — and the golden diadem, binding the forehead, and dropping from each extremity of the polished temples a rouleau of pearls, which, after traversing the cheeks, unite below the chin, — are all so unique and exclusively Hebraic, that each and all would have the same advantageous effect; proclaiming and notifying the character, without putting the fair supporter to any disagreeable expense of Hebrew or Chaldee. The silver bells alone would "bear the bell" from every competitor.

tor in the room ; and she might, besides, carry a cymbal, a dulcimer, or a timbrel in her hands.

In conclusion, my dear sir, let me congratulate you that Mr. Hartmann is now in Hades (as I said before) rather than in — ; for, had he been in this latter place, he would have been the ruin of you. It was his intention, as I am well assured, just about the time that he took his flight for Elysium, to have commenced regular contributor to your journal ; so great was his admiration of you, and also of the terms which you offer to the literary world. As a learned Orientalist, you could not decorously have rejected him ; and yet, once admitted, he would have beggared you before any means could have been discovered by the learned for putting a stop to him. *Απεραντολογία*, or what may be translated literally *world-without-ending-ness*, was his forte ; upon this he piqued himself, and most justly, since for covering the ground rapidly, and yet not advancing an inch, those who knew and valued him as he deserved would have backed him against the whole field of the *gens de plume* now in Europe. Had he lived, and fortunately for himself communicated his *Hebrew Toilette* to the world through you, instead of foundering (as he did) at Amsterdam, he would have flourished upon your exchequer ; and you would not have heard the last of him or his Toilette for the next twenty years. He dates, you see, from Amsterdam ; and, had you been weak enough to take him on board, he would have proved that “ Flying Dutchman ” that would infallibly have sunk your vessel.

The more is your obligation to me, I think, for sweating him down to such slender dimensions. And

speaking seriously, both of us perhaps will rejoice that, even with *his* talents for telling everything, he was obliged on this subject to leave many things untold. For, though it might be gratifying to a mere interest of curiosity, yet I believe that we should both be grieved if anything were to unsettle in our feelings the mysterious sanctities of Jerusalem, or to disturb that awful twilight which will forever brood over Judea — by letting in upon it the “common light of day;” and this effect would infallibly take place, if any one department of daily life, as it existed in Judea, were brought, with all the degrading minutiae of its details, within the petty finishing of a domestic portrait.

Farewell, my dear Sir, and believe me always your devoted servant and admirer,

Ω. Φ

SCENE THE FIRST.

1. That simple body-cloth, framed of leaves, skins, flax, wool, &c., which modesty had first introduced, for many centuries perhaps sufficed as the common attire of both sexes amongst the Hebrew Bedouins. It extended downwards to the knees, and upwards to the hips, about which it was fastened. Such a dress is seen upon many of the figures in the sculptures of Persepolis; even in modern times, Niebuhr found it the ordinary costume of the lower Arabians in Hedsjas; and Shaw assures us, that, from its commodious shape, it is still a favorite dishabille of the Arabian women when they are behind the curtains of the tent.

From this early rudiment was derived, by gradual elongation, that well-known under habiliment, which

in Hebrew is called *Ch'tonet*, and in Greek and Latin by words of similar sound.* In this stage of its progress, when extended to the neck and the shoulders, it represents pretty accurately the modern shirt, *camisa*, or *chemise* — except that the sleeves are wanting ; and during the first period of Jewish history it was probably worn as the sole under-garment by women of all ranks, both amongst the Bedouin-Hebrews and those who lived in cities. A very little further extension to the elbows and the calves of the legs, and it takes a shape which survives even to this day in Asia. Now, as then, the female habiliment was distinguished from the corresponding male one by its greater length ; and through all antiquity we find long clothes a subject of reproach to men, as an argument of effeminacy.

According to the rank or vanity of the wearer, this tunic was made of more or less costly materials ; for wool and flax was often substituted the finest byssus, or other silky substance ; and perhaps, in the latter periods, amongst families of distinction in Jerusalem, even silk itself. Splendor of coloring was not neglected ; and the opening at the throat was eagerly turned to account as an occasion for displaying fringe or rich embroidery.

Böttiger remarks that, even in the age of Augustus, the morning dress of Roman ladies when at home was nothing more than this very tunic, which, if it sate

* *Chiton* (*Xitōn*), in Greek, and, by inversion of the syllables, *Tunica* in Latin; that is (1.) *Chi-ton*; then (2.) *Ton-chi*. But, if so, (3.) Why not *Ton-cha* ; and (4.) Why not *Tun-cha* as also (5.) Why not *Tun-i-ca*. — Q. E. D. Such I believe, is the received derivation.

close, did not even require a girdle. The same remark applies to the Hebrew women, who, during the nomadic period of their history, had been accustomed to wear no night chemises at all, but slept quite naked,* or, at the utmost, with a cestus or zone; by way of bed-clothes, however, it must be observed that they swathed their person in the folds of a robe or shawl. Up to the time of Solomon this practice obtained through all ranks, and so long the universal household dress of a Hebrew lady in her harem was the tunic as here described; and in this she dressed herself the very moment that she rose from bed. Indeed, so long as the Hebrew women were content with a single tunic, it flowed loose in liberal folds about the body, and was fastened by a belt or a clasp, just as we find it at this day amongst all Asiatic nations. But when a second under garment was introduced, the inner one fitted close to the shape, whilst the outer one remained full and free as before.

II. No fashion of the female toilette is of higher antiquity than that of dyeing the margin of the eyelids and the eyebrows with a black pigment. It is mentioned or alluded to, 2 Kings ix. 30, Jeremiah iv. 30, Ezekiel xxiii. 40; to which may be added, Isaiah iii. 16. The practice had its origin in a discovery made accidentally in Egypt. For it happens that the sub-

* When the little Scottish king, about 1566, was taken ill in the night at Holyrood, Pinkerton mentions that all his attendants, male and female, rushed out into the adjacent gallery, naked as they were born, and thence comes the phrase so often used in the *contemporary* ballads—"Even as I left my naked bed."

stance used for this purpose in ancient times is a powerful remedy in cases of ophthalmia and inflammation of the eyes, complaints to which Egypt is, from local causes, peculiarly exposed. This endemic infirmity, in connection with the medical science for which Egypt was so distinguished, easily accounts for their discovering the uses of antimony, which is the principal ingredient in the pigments of this class. Egypt was famous for the fashion of painting the face from an early period; and in some remarkable curiosities illustrating the Egyptian toilette, which were discovered in the catacombs of Sahara in Middle Egypt, there was a single joint of a common reed containing an ounce or more of the coloring powder, and one of the needles for applying it. The entire process was as follows: — The mineral powder, finely prepared, was mixed up with a preparation of vinegar and gall-apples — sometimes with oil of almonds or other oils — sometimes, by very luxurious women, with costly gums and balsams.* And perhaps, as Sonnini describes the practice among the Mussulman women at present, the whole mass thus compounded was dried and again reduced to an impalpable powder, and consistency then given to it by the vapors of some odorous and unctuous

* Cheaper materials were used by the poorer Hebrews, especially of the Bedouin tribes — burnt almonds, lamp-black, root, the ashes of particular woods, the gall-apple boiled and pulverized, or any dark powder made into an unguent by suitable liquors. The modern Grecian women, in some districts, as Sonnini tells us, use the spine of the sea-polypus, calcined and finely pulverized for this purpose. Boxes of horn were used for keeping the pigment by the poorer Hebrews — of onyx or alabaster by the richer.

substance. Thus prepared, the pigment was applied to the tip or pointed ferule of a little metallic pencil, called in Hebrew *Makachol*, and made of silver, gold, or ivory; the eyelids were then closed, and the little pencil or probe, held horizontally, was inserted between them, a process which is briefly and picturesquely described in the Bible. The effect of the black rim which the pigment traced about the eyelid, was to throw a dark and majestic shadow over the eye; to give it a languishing and yet a lustrous expression; to increase its apparent size, and to apply the force of contrast to the white of the eye. Together with the eyelids, the Hebrew women colored the eyebrows, the point aimed at being twofold—to curve them into a beautiful arch of brilliant ebony, and, at the same time, to make the inner ends meet or flow into each other.

III. EAR-RINGS of gold, silver, inferior metals, or even horn, were worn by the Hebrew women in all ages; and in the flourishing period of the Jewish kingdom, probably by men; and so essential an ornament were they deemed, that in the idolatrous times even the images of their false gods were not considered becomingly attired without them. Their ear-rings were larger, according to the Asiatic taste, but whether quite large enough to admit the hand is doubtful. In a later age, as we collect from the Thalmud, Part vi. 43, the Jewish ladies wore gold or silver pendants, of which the upper part was shaped like a lentil, and the lower hollowed like a little cup or pipkin. It is probable also that, even in the oldest ages, it was a practice amongst them to suspend gold and silver rings, not

merely from the lower but also from the upper end of the ear, which was perforated like a sieve. The tinkling sound with which, upon the slightest motion, two or three tiers of rings would be set a-dancing about the cheeks, was very agreeable to the baby taste of the Asiatics.

From a very early age the ears of Hebrew women were prepared for this load of trinketry ; for, according to the Thalmud (ii. 23), they kept open the little holes after they were pierced by threads or slips of wood, a fact which may show the importance they attached to this ornament.

IV. NOSE-RINGS at an early period became a universal ornament in Palestine. We learn, from Biblical and from Arabic authority, that it was a practice of Patriarchal descent amongst both the African and Asiatic Bedouins, to suspend rings of iron, wood, or braided hair, from the nostrils of camels, oxen, &c. — the rope by which the animal was guided being attached to these rings. It is probable, therefore, that the early Hebrews who dwelt in tents, and who in the barrenness of desert scenery drew most of their hints for improving their personal embellishment from the objects immediately about them, were indebted for their nose-rings to this precedent of their camels. Sometimes a ring depended from both nostrils ; and the size of it was equal to that of the ear-ring ; so that, at times, its compass included both upper and under lip, as in the frame of a picture ; and, in the age succeeding to Solomon's reign, we hear of rings which were not less than three inches in diameter. Hebrew ladies of distinction had sometimes a cluster

of nose-rings, as well for the tinkling sound which they were contrived to emit, as for the shining light which they threw off upon the face.

That the nose-ring possessed no unimportant place in the Jewish toilette, is evident, from its being ranked, during the nomadic state of the Israelites, as one of the most valuable presents that a young Hebrew woman could receive from her lover. Amongst the Midianites, who were enriched by the caravan commerce, even men adopted this ornament: and this appears to have been the case in the family to which Job belonged [chap. xli. 2]. Under these circumstances, we should naturally presume that the Jewish courtezans, in the cities of Palestine, would not omit so conspicuous a trinket, with its glancing lights, and its tinkling sound: this we might presume, even without the authority of the Bible; but, in fact, both Isaiah and Ezekiel expressly mention it amongst their artifices of attraction.

Judith, when she appeared before the tent of Holofernes in the whole pomp of her charms, and apparelled with the most elaborate attention to splendor of effect, for the purpose of captivating the hostile general, did not omit its ornament. Even the Jewish Proverbs show how highly it was valued; and that it continued to be valued in latter times, appears from the ordinances of the Thalmud (ii. 21), in respect to the parts of the female wardrobe which were allowed to be worn on the Sabbath.

V. The Hebrew women of high rank, in the flourishing period of their state, wore NECKLACES composed of multiple rows of pearls. The thread on which the

pearls were strung was of flax or woollen,— and sometimes colored, as we learn from the Thalmud (vi. 43); and the different rows were not exactly concentric; but whilst some invested the throat, others descended to the bosom; and in many cases, even to the zone. On this part of the dress was lavished the greatest expense; and the Roman reproach was sometimes true of a Hebrew family, that its whole estate was locked up in a necklace. Tertullian complains heavily of a particular pearl necklace, which had cost about ten thousand pounds of English money, as of an enormity of extravagance. But, after making every allowance for greater proximity to the pearl fisheries, and for other advantages enjoyed by the people of Palestine, there is reason to believe that some Hebrew ladies possessed pearls which had cost at least five times that sum.* So much may be affirmed, without meaning to compare the most lavish of the ladies of Jerusalem with those of Rome, where it is recorded of some *élégantes*, that they actually slept with little bags of pearls suspended from their necks, that, even when sleeping, they might have mementoes of their pomp.

But the Hebrew necklaces were not always composed of pearls, or of pearls only — sometimes it was the custom to interchange the pearls with little golden bulbs or berries: sometimes they were blended with

* Cleopatra had a couple at that value; and Julius Cæsar had one, which he gave to Servilia, the beautiful mother of Brutus, valued by knaves who wished to buy (*empturiebant*) at forty-eight thousand pounds English, but by the envious females of Rome, at sixty-three thousand.

the precious stones; and at other times, the pearls were strung two and two, and their beautiful whiteness relieved by the interposition of red coral.

VI. Next came the BRACELETS of gold or ivory, and fitted up at the open side with a buckle or enamelled clasp of elaborate workmanship. These bracelets were also occasionally composed of gold or silver thread: and it was not unusual for a series of them to ascend from the wrist to the elbow. From the clasp, or other fastening of the bracelet, depended a delicate chain work or netting of gold; and in some instances, miniature festoons of pearls. Sometimes the gold chain-work was exchanged for little silver bells, which could be used, upon occasion, as signals of warning or invitation to a lover.

VII. This *bijouterie* for the arms naturally reminded the Hebrew lady of the ANKLE BELLS, and other similar ornaments for the feet and legs. These ornaments consisted partly in golden belts, or rings, which, descending from above the ankle, compressed the foot in various parts; and partly in shells and little jingling chains, which depended so as to strike against clappers fixed into the metallic belts. The pleasant tinkle of the golden belts in collision, the chains rattling, and the melodious chime of little silver ankle-bells, keeping time with the motions of the foot, made an accompaniment so agreeable to female vanity, that the stately daughters of Jerusalem, with their sweeping trains flowing after them, appear to have adopted a sort of measured tread, by way of impressing a regular cadence upon the music of their feet. The chains of gold were exchanged, as luxury ad-

vanced, for strings of pearls and jewels, which swept in snaky folds about the feet and ankles.

This, like many other peculiarities in the Hebrew dress, had its origin in a circumstance of their early nomadic life. It is usual with the Bedouins to lead the camel, when disposed to be restive, by a rope or a belt fastened to one of the fore-feet, sometimes to both; and it is also a familiar practice to soothe and to cheer the long-suffering animal with the sound of little bells, attached either to the neck or to one of the fore legs. Girls are commonly employed to lead the camels to water; and it naturally happened, that, with their lively fancies, some Hebrew or Arabian girl should be prompted to repeat, on her own person, what had so often been connected with an agreeable impression in her mute companions to the well.

It is probable, however, that afterwards, having once been introduced, this fashion was supported and extended by Oriental jealousy. For it rendered all clandestine movements very difficult in women; and by giving notice of their approach, it had the effect of preparing men for their presence, and keeping the road free from all spectacles that could be offensive to female delicacy.

From the Hebrew Bedouins, this custom passed to all the nations of Asia—Medes, Persians, Lydians, Arabs, &c.; and is dwelt on with peculiar delight by the elder Arabic poets. That it had spread to the westernmost parts of Africa early in the Christian times, we learn from Tertullian, who [foolish man] cannot suppress his astonishment, that the foolish women of his time should bear to inflict such com-

pression upon their tender feet. Even as early as the times of Herodotus, we find from his account of a Libyan nation, that the women and girls universally wore copper rings about their ankles. And at an after period, these ornaments were so much cherished by the Egyptian ladies, that, sooner than appear in public without their tinkling ankle-chimes, they preferred to bury themselves in the loneliest apartments of the harem.

Finally, the fashion spread partially into Europe ; to Greece even, and to polished Rome, in so far as regarded the ankle-belts, and the other ornamental appendages, with the single exception of the silver bells ; these were too entirely in the barbaresque taste, to support themselves under the frown of European culture.

VIII. The first rude sketch of the Hebrew SANDAL may be traced in that little tablet of undrest hide which the Arabs are in the habit of tying beneath the feet of their camels. This primitive form, after all the modifications and improvements it has received, still betrays itself to an attentive observer, in the very latest fashions of the sandal which Palestine has adopted.

To raw hides succeeded tanned leather, made of goat-skin, deer-skin, &c. ; this, after being accurately cut out to the shape of the sole, was fastened on the bare upper surface of the foot by two thongs, of which one was usually carried within the great toe, and the other in many circumvolutions round about the ankles, so that both finally met and tied just above the instep.

TOILETTE OF THE HEBREW LADY.

The laced sole or sandal, of this form, continued in Palestine to be the universal out-of-doors protection for the foot, up to the Christian era ; and it served for both sexes alike. It was not, however, worn within doors. At the threshold of the inner apartments the sandals were laid aside ; and visitors from a distance were presented with a vessel of water to cleanse the feet from the soiling of dust and perspiration.*

With this extreme simplicity in the form of the foot-apparel, there was no great field for improvement. The article contained two parts — the sole and the fastening. The first, as a subject for decoration, was absolutely desperate ; coarse leather being exchanged for fine, all was done that could be done ; and the wit of man was able to devise no further improvement. Hence it happened that the whole power of the inventive faculty was accumulated upon the fastenings, as the only subject that remained. These were infinitely varied. Belts of bright yellow, of purple, and of crimson, were adopted by ladies of distinction — especially those of Palestine, and it was a trial of art to throw these into the greatest possible varieties of convolution, and to carry them on to a nexus of the nappiest form, by which means a reticulation, or trellis-work, was accomplished, of the most brilliant coloring, which brought into powerful relief the dazzling color of the skin.

* Washing the feet was a ceremony of ancient times, adopted not merely with a view, 1st, to personal comfort, in hotter climates; or, 2d, to decorum of appearance where people walked about barefooted; but also, 3d, to the reclining posture in use at meals, which necessarily brought the feet into immediate contact with the snowy swan-down cushions, squabs, &c. of couches.

It is possible that, in the general rage for ornaments of gold which possessed the people of Palestine, during the ages of excessive luxury, the beauties of Jerusalem may have adopted gilt sandals with gilt fastenings, as the ladies of Egypt did. It is possible also, that the Hebrew ladies adopted at one time, in exchange for the sandal, slippers that covered the entire foot, such as were once worn at Babylon, and are still to be seen on many of the principal figures on the monuments of Persepolis; and, if this were really so, ample scope would in that case have been obtained for inventive art: variations without end might then have been devised on the fashion or the materials of the subject; and by means of color, embroidery, and infinite combinations of jewellery and pearls, an unceasing stimulation of novelty applied to the taste of the gorgeous, but still sensual and barbaresque Asiatic.

IX. The **VEIL** of various texture — coarse or fine — according to circumstances, was thrown over the head by the Hebrew lady, when she was unexpectedly surprised, or when a sudden noise gave reason to expect the approach of a stranger. This beautiful piece of drapery, which flowed back in massy folds over the shoulders, is particularly noticed by Isaiah, as holding an indispensable place in the wardrobe of his haughty countrywomen; and in this it was that the enamored Hebrew woman sought the beloved of her heart.

ADDENDA TO SCENE THE FIRST.

I. Of the Hebrew ornaments for the throat, some were true necklaces, in the modern sense, of several rows, the outermost of which descended to the breast, and had little pendulous cylinders of gold (in the poorer classes, of copper), so contrived as to make a jingling sound on the least motion of the person; others were more properly golden stocks, or throat-bands, fitted so close as to produce in the spectator an unpleasant imagination, and in the wearer as we learn from the Thalmud (vi. 43), until reconciled by use, to produce an actual feeling of constriction approaching to suffocation. Necklaces were, from the earliest times, a favorite ornament of the male sex in the East; and expressed the dignity of the wearer, as we see in the instances of Joseph, of Daniel, &c.; indeed the gold chain of office, still the badge of civic (and, until lately, of military) dignities, is no more than the outermost row of the Oriental necklace. Philo of Alexandria, and many other writers, both Persic and Arabian, give us some idea of the importance attached by the women of Asia to this beautiful ornament, and of the extraordinary money value which it sometimes bore: and from the case of the necklace of gold and amber, in the 15th Odyssey (v. 458), combined with many other instances of the same kind, there can be no doubt that it was the neighboring land of Phœnicia from which the Hebrew women obtained their necklaces, and the practice of wearing them.

II. The fashion, however, of adorning the necklace with golden *Suns* and *Moons*, so agreeable to the He-

drew ladies of Isaiah's time (chap. iii. 18), was not derived from Phœnicia, but from Arabia. At an earlier period (Judges viii. 21), the camels of the Midianites were adorned with golden moons, which also decorated the necks of the emirs of that nomadic tribe. These appendages were not used merely by way of ornament, but originally as talismans, or amulets, against sickness, danger, and every species of calamity to which the desert was liable. The particular form of the amulet is to be explained out of the primitive religion, which prevailed in Arabia up to the rise of Mohammedanism in the seventh century of Christianity — viz., the *Sabean* religion, or worship of the heavenly host — sun, moon, and stars — the most natural of all idolatries, and especially to a nomadic people in flat and pathless deserts, without a single way-mark or guidance for their wanderings, except what they drew from the silent heavens above them. It is certain, therefore, that long before their emigration into Palestine, the Israelites had received the practice of wearing suns and moons from the Midianites; even after their settlement in Palestine, it is certain that the worship of the starry host struck root pretty deeply at different periods; and that, to the sun and moon, in particular, were offered incense and libations.

From Arabia, this fashion diffused itself over many countries; * and it was not without great displeasure that, in a remote age, Jerome and Tertullian discovered

* Chemistry had its first origin in Arabia: and it is not impossible that the chemical nomenclature for gold and silver, viz., *sol* and *luna*, were derived from this early superstition of the Bedouin dress.

this idolatrous ornament upon the bosoms of their country-women.

The crescents, or *half*-moons of silver, in connection with the golden suns,* were sometimes set in a brilliant frame that represented a halo and still keep their ground on the Persian and Turkish toilette, as a favorite ornament.

III. The GOLDEN SNAKES, worn as one of the Hebrew appendages to the necklace, had the same idolatrous derivation, and originally were applied to the same superstitious use — as an amulet, or prophylactic ornament. For minds predisposed to this sort of superstition, the serpent had a special attraction under the circumstances of the Hebrews, from the conspicuous part which this reptile sustains in the mythologies of the East. From the earliest periods to which tradition ascends, serpents of various species were consecrated to the religious feelings of Egypt, by temples, sacrifices, and formal rites of worship. This mode of idolatry had at various periods infected Palestine. According to 2 Kings xviii. 4, at the accession of King Hezekiah, the Israelites had raised peculiar altars to a great brazen serpent, and burned incense upon them. Even at this day the Abyssinians have an unlimited reverence for serpents; and the blacks in general regard them as fit subjects for divine honors. Sonnini (ii. 388) tells us, that a serpent's skin is still looked upon in Egypt as a prophylactic against complaints.

* Chemistry had its first origin in Arabia: and it is not impossible that the chemical nomenclature for gold and silver, viz., *sol* and *luna*, were derived from this early superstition of the dodouin dress.

the head, and also as a certain cure for them. And of the same origin, no doubt, was the general belief of antiquity (according to Pliny, 30, 12), that the serpent's skin was a remedy for spasms. That the golden serpent kept its place as an ornament of the throat and bosom after the Christian era, we learn from Clement of Alexandria. That zealous father, so intolerant of superstitious mummary under every shape, directs his efforts against this fashion as against a device of the devil.

IV. To the lowest of the several concentric circles which composed the necklace was attached a little box, exquisitely wrought in silver or gold, sometimes an onyx phial of dazzling whiteness, depending to the bosom or even to the cincture, and filled with the rarest aromas and odorous spices of the East. What were the favorite essences preserved in this beautiful appendage to the female costume of Palestine it is not possible at this distance of time to determine with certainty — Isaiah having altogether neglected the case, and Hosea, who appears to allude to it (ii. 14), having only once distinctly mentioned it (ii. 20). However, the Thalmud particularizes musk, and the delightful oil distilled from the leaf of the aromatic *malabathrum* of Hindostan. To these we may venture to add oil of spikenard, myrrh, balsams, attar of roses, and rose-water, as the perfumes usually contained in the Hebrew scent-pendants.

Rose-water, which I am the first to mention as a Hebrew perfume, had, as I presume, a foremost place on the toilette of a Hebrew *belle*. Express Scriptural authority for it undoubtedly there is none; but it is

notorious that Palestine availed itself of *all* the advantages of Egypt, amongst which the rose in every variety was one. *Fium*, a province of Central Egypt, which the ancients called the garden of Egypt, was distinguished for innumerable species of the rose, and especially for those of the most balsamic order, and for the most costly preparations from it. The Thalmud not only speaks generally of the mixtures made by tempering it with oil (i. 135), but expressly cites (ii. 41) a peculiar rose-water as so costly an essence, that from its high price alone it became impossible to introduce the use of it into the ordinary medical practice. Indeed, this last consideration, and the fact that the highly-prized *quintessence* cannot be obtained except from an extraordinary multitude of the rarest roses, forbid us to suppose that even women of the first rank in Jerusalem could have made a very liberal use of rose-water. In our times, Savary found a single phial of it in the place of its manufacture, valued at four francs. As to the *oil of roses*, properly so called, which floats in a very inconsiderable quantity upon the surface of distilled rose-water, it is certain that the Hebrew ladies were *not* acquainted with it. This preparation can be obtained only from the balsamic roses of Fium, of Shiras, of Kerman, and of Kashmire, which surpass all the roses of the earth in power and delicacy of odor; and it is matter of absolute certainty, and incontrovertibly established by the celebrated Langlés, that this oil, which even in the four Asiatic countries just mentioned, ranks with the greatest rarities, and in Shiras itself is valued at its weight in gold, was discovered by mere accident, on occasion of some festiva solemnity in the year 1612.

V. To what I said in the first scene of my exhibition about the Hebrew ear-ornaments, I may add,

1. That sometimes, as Best remarked of the Hindoo dancing girls, their ears were swollen from the innumerable perforations drilled into them to support their loads of trinketry.

2. That in the large pendants of coral which the Hebrew ladies were accustomed to attach to their ears, either in preference to jewels, or in alternation with jewels, they particularly delighted in that configuration which imitated a cluster of grapes.

3. That in ear-rings made of gold, they preferred the form of drops, or of globes and bulbs.

4. That of all varieties, however, of this appendage, pearls maintained the preference amongst the ladies of Palestine, and were either strung upon a thread, or attached by little hooks — singly or in groups, according to their size. This taste was very early established amongst the Jews, and chiefly, perhaps, through their intercourse with the Midianites, amongst whom we find the great emirs wearing pearl ornaments of this class.

Mutatis mutandis, these four remarks apply also and equally to the case of the nose ornaments.

SCENE THE SECOND.

I. THE HAIR. — This section I omit altogether, though with more room at my disposal it would be well worth translating as a curiosity. It is the essay of a finished and perfect knave, who, not merely being rather bare of facts, but having literally not one solitary fact of any kind or degree, small or great, sits down 'a

write a treatise on the mode of dressing hair amongst Hebrew ladies. Samson's hair, and the dressing it got from the Philistines, is the nearest approach that he ever makes to his subject; and being conscious that this case of Samson and the Philistines is the one sole allusion to the subject of Hebrew hair that he is possessed of — for he altogether overlooks (which surely in *him* is criminal and indictable inadvertence) the hair of Absalom — he brings it round upon the reader as often perhaps as it will bear — viz., not oftener than once every sixth page. The rest is one continued shuffle to avoid coming upon the ground; and upon the whole, though too barefaced, yet really not without ingenuity. Take, by way of specimen, his very satisfactory dissertation on the particular sort of combs which the Hebrew ladies were pleased to patronize: —

“ *Combs.* — Whether the ladies of Palestine had upon their toilette a peculiar comb for parting the hair, another for turning it up, &c.; as likewise whether these combs were, as in ancient Rome, made of boxwood or of ivory, or other costly and appropriate material, all these are questions upon which I — am not able, upon my honor, to communicate the least information. But from the general silence of antiquity, prophets and all,* upon the subject of Hebrew combs,

*The Thalmud is the only Jewish authority which mentions such a utensil of the toilette as a comb (vi. 39), but without any particular description. Hartmann adds two remarks worth quoting. 1. That the Hebrew style of the *coiffure* may probably be collected from the Syrian coins; and 2. That black hair being admired in Palestine, and the Jewish hair being naturally black it is probable that the Jewish ladies did not color their hair, as the Romans did.

my own private opinion is, that the ladies used their fingers for this purpose, in which case there needs no more to be said on the subject of Hebrew combs." Certainly not. All questions are translated from the visionary combs to the palpable and fleshly fingers ; but the combs being usually of ivory in the Roman establishments, were costly, and might breed disputes ; but the fingers were a dowry of nature, and cost nothing.

II. PERFUMES.—Before, however, the hair received its final arrangement from the hands of the waiting-maid, it was held open and dishevelled to receive the fumes of frankincense, aloeswood, cassia, costmary, and other odorous woods, gums, balsams, and spices of India, Arabia, or Palestine — placed upon glowing embers, in vessels of golden fretwork. It is probable also that the Hebrew ladies used amber, bisam, and the musk of Thibet ; and, when fully arranged, the hair was sprinkled with oil of nard, myrrh, oil of cinnamon, &c. The importance attached to this part of the Hebrew toilette may be collected indeed from an ordinance of the Thalmud (iii. 80), which directs that the bridegroom shall set apart one-tenth of the income which the bride brings him, for the purchase of perfumes, essences, precious ointments, &c. All these articles were preserved either in golden boxes or in little oval narrow-necked phials of dazzling white alabaster, which bore the name of onyx, from its resemblance to the precious stone of that name, but was in fact a very costly sort of marble, obtained in the quarries of Upper Egypt or those of the Libanus in Syria. Indeed, long before the birth of Christ, alabaster was

in such general use for purposes of this kind in Palestine, that it became the generic name for valuable boxes, no matter of what material. To prevent the evaporation of the contents, the narrow neck of the phial was re-sealed every time it was opened. It is probable also that the *myrrhine* cups, about which there has been so much disputing, were no strangers to the Jewish toilette.

III. The MIRROR was not made of glass (for glass mirrors cannot be shown to have existed before the thirteenth century), but of polished metals ; and amongst these silver was in the greatest esteem, as being capable of a higher burnish than other metals, and less liable to tarnish. Metallic mirrors are alluded to by Job (xxxvii. 18). But it appears from the Second Book of Moses (xxxviii. 8), that in that age copper must have been the metal employed throughout the harems of Palestine. For a general contribution of mirrors being made upon one occasion by the Israelitish women, they were melted down and recast into washing vessels for the priestly service. Now the sacred utensils, as we know from other sources, were undeniably of copper. There is reason to think, however, that the copper was alloyed, according to the prevailing practice in that age, with some proportions of lead or tin. In after ages, when silver was chiefly employed, it gave place occasionally to gold. Mines of this metal were well known in Palestine ; but there is no evidence that precious stones, which were used for this purpose in the ages of European luxury, were ever so used in Palestine, or in any part of Asia.

As to shape, the Hebrew mirrors were always

either circular or oval, and cast indifferently flat or concave. They were framed in superb settings, often of pearls and jewels; and, when tarnished, were cleaned with a sponge full of hyssop, the universal cleansing material in Palestine.

SCENE THE THIRD.

Head-Dresses.

The head-dresses of the Hebrew ladies may be brought under three principal classes:—

The first was a **NETWORK CAP**, made of fine wool or cotton, and worked with purple or crimson flowers. Sometimes the meshes of the net were of gold thread. The rim or border of the cap, generally of variegated coloring, was often studded with jewellery or pearls; and at the back was ornamented with a bow, having a few ends or tassels flying loose.

Secondly, a **TURBAN**, managed in the following way:—First of all, one or more caps in the form of a half-oval, such as are still to be seen upon the monuments of Egyptian and Persepolitan art, was fastened round the head by a ribbon or fillet tied behind. This cap was of linen, sometimes perhaps of cotton, and in the inferior ranks oftentimes of leather, or, according to the prevailing fashion, of some kind of metal; and, in any case, it had ornaments worked into its substance. Round this white or glittering ground were carried, in snaky windings, ribbons of the finest tiffany, or of awn resembling our cambric; and to conceal the joinings, a silky substance was carried in folds, which pursued the opposite direction, and crossed the tiffany

at right angles. For the purpose of calling out and relieving the dazzling whiteness of the ground, colors of the most brilliant class were chosen for the ribbons : and these ribbons were either embroidered with flowers in gold thread, or had ornaments of that description interwoven with their texture.

Thirdly, the HELMET, adorned pretty nearly as the turban ; and, in imitation of the helmets worn by the Chaldean generals, having long tails or tassels depending from the hinder part, and flowing loosely between the shoulders. According to the Oriental taste for perfumes, all the ribbons or fillets used in these helmets and turbans were previously steeped in perfumes.

Finally, in connection with the turban, and often with the veil, was a beautiful ornament for the forehead and the face, which the ladies of this day would do well to recall. Round the brow ran a bandeau or tiara of gold or silver, three fingers'-breadth, and usually set with jewels or pearls : from this, at each of the temples, depended a chain of pearls or of coral, which, following the margin of the cheeks, either hung loose or united below the chin.

SCENE THE FOURTH.

I. The reader has been already made acquainted with the *chemise*, or innermost under-dress. The Hebrew ladies, however, usually wore two under-dresses, the upper of which it now remains to describe. In substance it was generally of a fine transparent texture, like the muslins (if we may so call them) of Cos ; in the later ages it was no doubt of silk.

The *chemise* sate close up to the throat ; and w

have already mentioned the elaborate work which adorned it about the opening. But the opening of the robe which we are now describing was of much larger compass, being cut down to the bosom; and the embroidery, &c., which enriched it was still more magnificent. The *chemise* reached down only to the calf of the leg, and the sleeve of it to the elbow: but the upper chemise or tunic, if we may so call it, descended in ample draperies to the feet, scarcely allowing the point of the foot to discover itself; and the sleeves enveloped the hands to their middle. Great pomp was lavished on the folds of the sleeves; but still greater on the hem of the robe and the fringe attached to it. The hem was formed by a broad border of purple, shaded and relieved according to patterns; and sometimes embroidered in gold thread with the most elegant objects from the animal or vegetable kingdoms. To that part which fell immediately behind the heels, there were attached thin plates of gold; or, by way of variety, it was studded with golden stars and filigree-work, sometimes with jewels and pearls interchangeably.

II. On this upper tunic, to confine the exorbitance of its draperies, and to prevent their interfering with the free motions of the limbs, a superb GIRDLE was bound about the hips. Here, if anywhere, the Hebrew ladies endeavored to pour out the whole pomp of their splendor, both as to materials and workmanship. Belts from three to four inches broad, of the most delicate cottony substance, were chosen as the ground of this important part of female attire. The finest flowers of Palestine were here exhibited in rich relief,

and in their native colors, either woven in the loom, or by the needle of the embroiderer. The belt's being thirty or forty feet long, and carried round and round the person, it was in the power of the wearer to exhibit an infinite variety of forms, by allowing any fold or number of folds at pleasure to rise up more or less to view, just as fans or the colored edges of books with us are made to exhibit landscapes, &c., capable of great varieties of expansion as they are more or less unfolded. The fastening was by a knot below the bosom, and the two ends descended below the fringe ; which, if not the only fashion in use, was, however, the prevailing one, as we learn both from the sculptures at Persepolis, and from the costume of the high priest.

Great as the cost was of these girdles, it would have been far greater had the knot been exchanged for a clasp ; and in fact at a later period, when this fashion did really take place, there was no limit to the profusion with which pearls of the largest size and jewellery were accumulated upon this conspicuous centre of the dress. Latterly the girdles were fitted up with beautiful chains, by means of which they could be contracted or enlarged, and with gold buckles, and large bosses and clasps, that gradually became the basis for a ruinous display of expenditure.

In conclusion, I must remark, that in Palestine, as elsewhere, the girdle was sometimes used as a purse ; whether it were that the girdle itself was made hollow (as is expressly affirmed of the high priest's girdle) or that, without being hollow, its numerous foldings afforded a secure depository for articles of small size.

Even in our days, it is the custom to conceal the dagger, the handkerchief for wiping the face, and other bagatelles of personal convenience, in the folds of the girdle. However, the richer and more distinguished classes in Palestine appear to have had a peculiar and separate article of that kind. And this was —

III. A PURSE made either of metal (usually gold or silver), or of the softest leather, &c., which was attached by a lace to the girdle, or kept amongst its folds, and which, even in the eyes of Isaiah, was important enough to merit a distinct mention. It was of a conical shape ; and at the broader end was usually enriched with ornaments of the most elaborate and exquisite workmanship. No long time after the Christian era, the cost of these purses had risen to such a height, that Tertullian complains, with great displeasure, of the ladies of his time, that in the mere purse, apart from its contents, they carried about with them the price of a considerable estate.

The girdle, however, still continued to be the appropriate depository for the napkin (to use the old English word) or sudatory — *i. e.*, handkerchief for clearing the forehead of perspiration. As to pocket-handkerchiefs, in our northern use of them, it has been satisfactorily shown by Böttiger, in a German Journal, that the Greek and Roman ladies knew nothing of that modern appendage to the pocket,* how-

* Or rather it was required only in a catarrh, or other case of checked perspiration, which in those climates was a case of very rare occurrence. It has often struck me — that without needing the elaborate aid of Böttiger's researches, simply from one clause in Juvenal's picture of old age and its infirmities we might de-

ever indispensable it may appear to us ; and the same arguments apply with equal force to the climate of Palestine.

IV. The glittering RINGS, with which (according to Isaiah iii. 21) the Hebrew ladies adorned their hands, seem to me originally to have been derived from the seal-rings, which, whether suspended from the neck, or worn upon the finger, have in all ages been the most favorite ornament of Asiatics. These splendid baubles were naturally in the highest degree attractive to women, both from the beauty of the stones which were usually selected for this purpose, and from the richness of the setting — to say nothing of the exquisite art which the ancient lapidaries displayed in cutting them. The stones chiefly valued by the ladies of Palestine were rubies, emeralds, and chrysolites ; and these, set in gold, sparkled on the middle or little finger of the right hand ; and in luxurious times upon *all* the fingers, even the thumb ; nay, in some cases, upon the great toe.

SCENE THE FIFTH.

Upper Garment.

The upper or outer garments, which, for both sexes, under all varieties and modifications, the Hebrews expressed by the comprehensive denomination of SIMLAH,

duce the Roman habit of dispensing with a pocket-handkerchief. Amongst these infirmities he notices the *madidi infantia nasi* — the second childhood of a nose that needs wiping. But, if this kind of defluxion was peculiar to infancy and extreme old age, it was obviously no affection of middle age.

have in every age, and through all parts of the hot climates, in Asia and Africa alike, been of such voluminous compass as not only to envelope the whole person, but to be fitted for a wide range of miscellaneous purposes. Sometimes (as in the triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem) they were used as carpets; sometimes as coverings for the backs of camels, horses, or asses, to render the rider's seat less incommodious; sometimes as a bed coverlid or counterpane; at other times as sacks for carrying articles of value; or finally, as curtains, hangings of parlors, occasional tapestry, or even as sails for boats.

From these illustrations of the uses to which it was applicable, we may collect the form of this robe; that it was nothing more than a shawl of large dimensions, or long square of cloth, just as it came from the weaver's loom, which was immediately thrown round the person, without receiving any artificial adjustment to the human shape.

So much for the *form*: with regard to the *material*, there was less uniformity; originally it was of goats' or camels' hair; but as civilization and the luxury of cities increased, these coarse substances were rejected for the finest wool and Indian cotton. Indeed, through all antiquity, we find that pure unsullied white was the festal color, and more especially in Palestine, where the indigenous soaps, and other cleaning materials, gave them peculiar advantages for adopting a dress of that delicate and perishable lustre.

With the advance of luxury, however, came a love of variety; and this, added to the desire for more stimulating impressions than could be derived from

blank unadorned white, gradually introduced all sorts of innovations both in form and color; though, with respect to the first, amidst all the changes through which it travelled, the old original outline still manifestly predominated. An account of the leading varieties we find in the celebrated third chapter of Isaiah.

The most opulent women of Palestine, beyond all other colors for the upper robe, preferred purple; or, if not purple throughout the entire robe, at any rate purple flowers upon a white ground. The winter clothing of the very richest families in Palestine was manufactured in their own houses; and for winter clothing, more especially the Hebrew taste, no less than the Grecian and the Roman, preferred the warm and sunny scarlet, the puce color, the violet, and the regal purple.*

Very probable it is that the Hebrew ladies, like those of Greece, were no strangers to the half-mantle—fastened by a clasp in front of each shoulder, and suffered to flow in free draperies down the back; this was an occasional and supernumerary garment flung over the regular upper robe -- properly so called.

There was also a longer mantle, reaching to the ankles, usually of a violet color, which, having no sleeves, was meant to expose to view the beauty, not only of the upper robe, but even of the outer tunic formerly described.

By the way, it should be mentioned that, in order to

* By which was probably meant a color nearer to crimson than to the blue or violet class of purples.

steep them in fine odor, all parts of the wardrobe were stretched on a reticulated or grated vessel — called by the Thalmud (vi. 77) *Kanklin* — from which the steams of rich perfumes were made to ascend.

In what way the upper robe was worn and fastened may be collected perhaps with sufficient probability from the modern Oriental practice, as described by travellers ; but as we have no *direct* authority on the subject, I shall not detain the reader with any conjectural speculations.

SCENE THE SIXTH.

Dress of Ceremony.

One magnificent dress remains yet to be mentioned — viz., the dress of honor or festival dress, which answers in every respect to the modern CAFTAN. This was used on all occasions of ceremony, as splendid weddings, presentations at the courts of kings, sumptuous entertainments, &c. ; and all persons who stood in close connection with the throne, as favorites, crown-officers, distinguished military commanders, &c., received such a dress as a gift from the royal treasury, in order to prepare them at all times for the royal presence. According to the universal custom of Asia, the trains were proportioned in length to the rank of the wearer ; whence it is that the robes of the high-priest were adorned with a train of superb dimensions ; and even Jehovah is represented (Isaiah vi. 1) as filling the heavenly palace with the length of his train.*

* It has been doubted whether these trains were supported by train-bearers ; but one argument makes it probable that they

Another distinction of this festival robe was the extraordinary fulness and length of the sleeves; these descended to the knee, and often ran to the ankle or to the ground. In the sleeves and in the trains, but especially in the latter, lay the chief pride of a Hebrew *belle*, when dressed for any great solemnity or occasion of public display.

FINAL NOTES.

I. The *Syndon*, mentioned by Isaiah, &c., was a delicate and transparent substance, like our tiffany, and in point of money value was fully on a level with the caftan; but whether imported from Egypt or imitated in the looms of the Hebrews and Phœnicians, is doubtful. It was worn next to the skin, and consequently, in the harems of the great, occupied the place of the under tunic (or *chemise*) previously described; and as luxury advanced, there is reason to think that it was used as a night *chemise*.

II. The *Caftan* is the *Kalaat* of the East, or *Kelaat* so often mentioned by modern travellers; thus, for example, Thevenot (tom. iii. p. 352) says — “Le Roi fait assez souvent des pr sens à ses Khans, &c., L'on appelle ces pr sens *Kalaat*.” Chardin. (iii. 101), “On appelle *Calaat* les habits que le Roi donne par honneur.” And lately, in Lord Amherst’s progress through the northern provinces of our Indian empire, &c., we read continually of the *Khelawt*, or robe of state, as a present made by the native princes to distinguished officers.

The Caftan, or festival robe of the Hebrews, was, in my opinion, the *Πεπλος* of the Greeks, or *palla* of the Romans. Among the points of resemblance are these :—

1. The *palla* was flung like a cloak or mantle over the *stola* or

were not — viz., that they were particularly favorable to the peacock walk or strut, which was an express object of imitation in the gait of the Hebrew women.

uppermost robe. “ *Ad talos stola denissa et circundata pallâ.*”

2. The *palla* not only descended in flowing draperies to the feet (thus Tibullus, i. vii. C, “ *Fusa sed ad teneros lutea palla pedes* ”), but absolutely swept the ground. “ *Verrit humum Tyrio saturatâ murice pallâ.*”

3. The *palla* was one of the same wide compass, and equally distinguished for its splendor.

4. Like the Hebrew festival garment, the *palla* was a *vestis seposita*, and reserved for rare solemnities.

With respect to the Πεπλος, Eustathius describes it as *μέγαν καὶ περικαλλέα καὶ ποικιλὸν περιβολαῖον*, a large and very beautiful and variegated enveloping mantle; and it would be easy in other respects to prove its identity with the *Palla*.

Salmasius, by the way, in commenting upon Tertullian *de Pallio*, is quite wrong where he says — “ *Palla nunquam de virili pallio dicitur.*” Tibullus (tom. iii. iv. 35) sufficiently contradicts that opinion

THE SPHINX'S RIDDLE.

THE most ancient* story in the Pagan records, older by two generations than the story of Troy, is that of Oedipus and his mysterious fate, which wrapt in ruin both himself and all his kindred. No story whatever continued so long to impress the Greek sensibilities with religious awe, or was felt by the great tragic poets to be so supremely fitted for scenical representation. In one of its stages, this story is clothed with the majesty of darkness ; in another stage, it is radiant with burning lights of female love, the most faithful and heroic, offering a beautiful relief to the preternatural malice dividing the two sons of Oedipus. This malice was so intense, that when the corpses of both brothers were burned

* That is, amongst stories not wearing a *mythologic* character, such as those of Prometheus, Hercules, &c. The era of Troy and its siege is doubtless by some centuries older than its usual chronologic date of nine centuries before Christ. And considering the mature age of Eteocles and Polynices, the two sons of Oedipus, at the period of the "Seven against Thebes," which seven were contemporary with the fathers of the heroes engaged in the Trojan war, it becomes necessary to add sixty or seventy years to the Trojan date, in order to obtain that of Oedipus and the Sphinx. Out of the Hebrew Scriptures, there is nothing purely historic so old as this.

together on the same funeral pyre (as by one tradition they were), the flames from each parted asunder, and refused to mingle. This female love was so intense, that it survived the death of its object, cared not for human praise or blame, and laughed at the grave which waited in the rear for itself, yawning visibly for immediate retribution. There are four separate movements through which this impassioned tale devolves ; all are of commanding interest ; and all wear a character of portentous solemnity, which fits them for harmonizing with the dusky shadows of that deep antiquity into which they ascend.

One only feature there is in the story, and this belongs to its second stage (which is also its sublimest stage), where a pure taste is likely to pause, and to revolt as from something not perfectly reconciled with the general depth of the coloring. This lies in the Sphinx's riddle, which, as hitherto explained, seems to us deplorably below the grandeur of the occasion. Three thousand years, at the least, have passed away since that riddle was propounded ; and it seems odd enough that the proper solution should not present itself till November of 1849. That is true : it seems odd, but still it is possible, that we, in *anno domini* 1849, may see further through a mile-stone than Oedipus, the king, in the year b. c. twelve or thirteen hundred. The long interval between the enigma and its answer may remind the reader of an old story in Joe Miller, where a traveller, apparently an inquisitive person, in passing through a toll-bar, said to the keeper, "How do you like your eggs dressed?" Without waiting for the answer, he rode off; but twenty-five years later,

riding through the same bar, kept by the same man, the traveller looked steadfastly at him, and received the monosyllabic answer, “*Poached.*” A long parenthesis is twenty-five years ; and we, gazing back over a far wider gulf of time, shall endeavor to look hard at the Sphinx, and to convince that mysterious young lady,—if our voice can reach her,—that she was too easily satisfied with the answer given ; that the true answer is yet to come ; and that, in fact, OEdipus shouted before he was out of the wood.

But, first of all, let us rehearse the circumstances of this old Grecian story. For in a popular journal it is always a duty to assume that perhaps three readers out of four may have had no opportunity, by the course of their education, for making themselves acquainted with classical legends. And in this present case, besides the indispensableness of the story to the proper comprehension of our own improved answer to the Sphinx, the story has a separate and independent value of its own ; for it illustrates a profound but obscure idea of Pagan ages, which is connected with the elementary glimpses of man into the abysses of his higher relations, and lurks mysteriously amongst what Milton so finely calls “the dark foundations” of our human nature. This notion it is hard to express in modern phrase, for we have no idea exactly corresponding to it ; but in Latin it was called *piacularity*. The reader must understand upon our authority, *nostro periculo*, and in defiance of all the false translations spread through books, that the ancients (meaning the Greeks and Romans before the time of Christianity) had no idea, not by the faintest vestige, of what in the scripture

system is called *sin*. The Latin word *peccatum*, the Greek word *amartia*, are translated continually by the word *sin*; but neither one word nor the other has any such meaning in writers belonging to the pure classical period. When baptized into new meaning by the adoption of Christianity, these words, in common with many others, transmigrated into new and philosophic functions. But originally they tended towards no such acceptations, nor could have done so; seeing that the ancients had no avenue opened to them through which the profound idea of *sin* would have been even dimly intelligible. Plato, four hundred years before Christ, or Cicero, more than three hundred years later, was fully equal to the idea of *guilt* through all its gamut; but no more equal to the idea of *sin*, than a sagacious hound to the idea of gravitation, or of central forces. It is the tremendous postulate upon which this idea reposes that constitutes the initial moment of that revelation which is common to Judaism and to Christianity. We have no intention of wandering into any discussion upon this question. It will suffice for the service of the occasion if we say that guilt, in all its modifications, implies only a defect or a wound in the individual. Sin, on the other hand, the most mysterious, and the most sorrowful of all ideas, implies a taint not in the individual but in the race — that is the distinction: or a taint in the individual, not through any local disease of his own but through scrofula equally diffused through the infinite family of man. We are not speaking controversially, either as teachers of theology or of philosophy; and we are careless of the particular construction by which the

reader interprets to himself this profound idea. What we affirm is, that this idea was utterly and exquisitely inappreciable by Pagan Greece and Rome ; that various translations from Pindar,* from Aristophanes, and from the Greek tragedians, embodying at intervals this word *sin*, are more extravagant than would be the word *category* introduced into the harangue of an Indian sachem amongst the Cherokees ; and finally that the very nearest approach to the abysmal idea which we Christians attach to the word sin — (an approach, but to that which never can be touched — a writing as of palmistry upon each man's hand, but a writing which “ no man can read ”) — lies in the Pagan idea of *piacularity* ; which is an idea thus far like hereditary sin, that it expresses an evil to which the party affected has not consciously concurred ; which is thus far *not* like hereditary sin, that it expresses an evil personal to the individual and not extending itself to the race.

This was the evil exemplified in Oedipus. He was loaded with an insupportable burthen of pariah participation in pollution and misery, to which his will had never consented. He seemed to have committed the most atrocious crimes ; he was a murderer, he was

* And when we are speaking of this subject, it may be proper to mention (as the very extreme anachronism which the case admits of) that Mr. Archdeacon W. has absolutely introduced the idea of sin into the “ Iliad ; ” and, in a regular octavo volume, has represented it as the key to the whole movement of the fable. It was once made a reproach to Southey that his Don Roderick spoke, in his penitential moods, a language too much resembling that of Methodism ; yet, after all, that prince was a Christian, and a Christian amongst Muslims. But what are we to think of Achilles and Patroclus, when described as being (or *not* being) “ under convictions of sin ” ?

a parricide, he was doubly incestuous, and yet how? In the case where he might be thought a murderer, he had stood upon his self-defence, not benefiting by any superior resources, but, on the contrary, fighting as one man against three, and under the provocation of insufferable insolence. Had he been a parricide? What matter, as regarded the moral guilt, if his father (and by the fault of that father) were utterly unknown to him? Incestuous had he been? but how, if the very oracles of fate, as expounded by events and by mysterious creatures such as the Sphinx, had stranded him, like a ship left by the tide, upon this dark unknown shore of a criminality unsuspected by himself? All these treasons against the sanctities of nature had Oedipus committed; and yet was this Oedipus a thoroughly good man, no more dreaming of the horrors in which he was entangled, than the eye at noonday in midsummer is conscious of the stars that lie far behind the daylight. Let us review rapidly the incidents of his life.

Laius, King of Thebes, the descendant of Labdacus, and representing the illustrious house of the Labdaidæ, about the time when his wife, Jocasta, promised to present him with a child, had learned from various prophetic voices that this unborn child was destined to be his murderer. It is singular that in all such cases, which are many, spread through classical literature, the parties menaced by fate believe the menace; else why do they seek to evade it? and yet believe it not: else why do they fancy themselves able to evade it? This fatal child, who was the Oedipus of tragedy, being at length born, Laius committed the infant to a slave, with orders to

expose it on Mount Cithæron. This was done ; the infant was suspended, by thongs running through the fleshy parts of his feet, to the branches of a tree, and he was supposed to have perished by wild beasts. But a shepherd, who found him in this perishing state, pitied his helplessness, and carried him to his master and mistress, King and Queen of Corinth who adopted and educated him as their own child. That he was *not* their own child, and that in fact he was a foundling of unknown parentage, Oedipus was not slow of finding from the insults of his schoolfellows ; and at length, with the determination of learning his origin and his fate, being now a full-grown young man, he strode off from Corinth to Delphi. The oracle at Delphi, being as usual in collusion with his evil destiny, sent him off to seek his parents at Thebes. On his journey thither, he met, in a narrow part of the road, a chariot proceeding in the counter direction from Thebes to Delphi. The charioteer, relying upon the grandeur of his master, insolently ordered the young stranger to clear the road ; upon which, under the impulse of his youthful blood, Oedipus slew him on the spot. The haughty grandeé who occupied the chariot rose up in fury to avenge this outrage, fought with the young stranger, and was himself killed. One attendant upon the chariot remained ; but he, warned by the fate of his master and his fellow-servant, withdrew quietly into the forest that skirted the road, revealing no word of what had happened, but reserved, by the dark destiny of Oedipus, to that evil day on which *his* evidence concurring with other circumstantial exposures, should convict the young Corinthian emigrant of parricide.

For the present, Oedipus viewed himself as no criminal, but much rather as an injured man, who had simply used his natural powers of self-defence against an insolent aggressor. This aggressor, as the reader will suppose, was Laius. The throne therefore was empty, on the arrival of Oedipus in Thebes : the king's death was known, but not the mode of it ; and that Oedipus was the murderer could not reasonably be suspected either by the people of Thebes, or by Oedipus himself. The whole affair would have had no interest for the young stranger ; but, through the accident of a public calamity then desolating the land, a mysterious monster, called the Sphinx, half woman and half lion, was at that time on the coast of Boeotia, and levying a daily tribute of human lives from the Boeotian territory. This tribute, it was understood, would continue to be levied from the territories attached to Thebes, until a riddle proposed by the monster should have been satisfactorily solved. By way of encouragement to all who might feel prompted to undertake so dangerous an adventure, the authorities of Thebes offered the throne and the hand of the widowed Jocasta as the prize of success ; and Oedipus, either on public or on selfish motives, entered the lists as a competitor.

The riddle proposed by the Sphinx ran in these terms : "What creature is that which moves on four feet in the morning, on two feet at noonday, and on three towards the going down of the sun?" Oedipus, after some consideration, answered that the creature was MAN, who creeps on the ground with hands and feet when an infant, walks upright in the vigor of manhood, and leans upon a staff in old age. Imme-

diately the dreadful Sphinx confessed the truth of his solution by throwing herself headlong from a point of rock into the sea ; her power being overthrown as soon as her secret had been detected. Thus was the Sphinx destroyed ; and, according to the promise of the proclamation, for this great service to the state Oedipus was immediately recompensed. He was saluted King of Thebes, and married to the royal widow Jocasta. In this way it happened, but without suspicion either in himself or others, pointing to the truth, that Oedipus had slain his father, had ascended his father's throne, and had married his own mother.

Through a course of years all these dreadful events lay hushed in darkness ; but at length a pestilence arose, and an embassy was despatched to Delphi, in order to ascertain the cause of the heavenly wrath, and the proper means of propitiating that wrath. The embassy returned to Thebes armed with a knowledge of the fatal secrets connected with Oedipus, but under some restraints of prudence in making a publication of what so dreadfully affected the most powerful personage in the state. Perhaps, in the whole history of human art as applied to the evolution of a poetic fable, there is nothing more exquisite than the management of this crisis by Sophocles. A natural discovery, first of all, connects Oedipus with the death of Laius. That discovery comes upon him with some surprise, but with no shock of fear or remorse. That he had killed a man of rank in a sudden quarrel, he had always known ; that this man was now discovered to be Laius, added nothing to the reasons for regret. The affair re-

mained as it was. It was simply a case of personal strife on the high road, and one which had really grown out of aristocratic violence in the adverse party. Oedipus had asserted his own rights and dignity only as all brave men would have done in an age that knew nothing of civic police.

It was true that this first discovery — the identification of himself as the slayer of Laius — drew after it two others, namely, that it was the throne of his victim on which he had seated himself, and that it was *his* widow whom he had married. But these were no offences ; and, on the contrary, they were distinctions won at great risk to himself, and by a great service to the country. Suddenly, however, the re-appearance and disclosures of the shepherd who had saved his life during infancy in one moment threw a dazzling but funereal light upon the previous discoveries that else had seemed so trivial. In an instant everything was read in another sense. The death of Laius, the marriage with his widow, the appropriation of his throne, all towered into colossal crimes, illimitable, and opening no avenues to atonement. Oedipus, in the agonies of his horror, inflicts blindness upon himself ; Jocasta commits suicide ; the two sons fall into fiery feuds for the assertion of their separate claims on the throne, but previously unite for the expulsion of Oedipus, as one who had become a curse to Thebes. And thus the poor, heart-shattered king would have been turned out upon the public roads, aged, blind, and a helpless vagrant, but for the sublime piety of his two daughters, but especially of Antigone, the elder. They share with their unhappy father the hardships and

perils of the road, and do not leave him until the moment of his mysterious summons to some ineffable death in the woods of Colonus. The expulsion of Polynices, the younger son, from Thebes ; his return with a confederate band of princes for the recovery of his rights ; the death of the two brothers in single combat ; the public prohibition of funeral rights to Polynices, as one who had levied war against his native land ; and the final re-appearance of Antigone, who defies the law, and secures a grave to her brother at the certain price of a grave to herself--these are the sequels and arrears of the family overthrow accomplished through the dark destiny of Oedipus.

And now, having reviewed the incidents of the story, in what respect is it that we object to the solution of the Sphinx's riddle ? We do not object to it as *a* solution of the riddle, and the only one possible at the moment ; but what we contend is, that it is not *the* solution. All great prophecies, all great mysteries, are likely to involve double, triple, or even quadruple interpretations—each rising in dignity, each cryptically involving another. Even amongst natural agencies, precisely as they rise in grandeur, they multiply their final purposes. Rivers and seas, for instance, are useful, not merely as means of separating nations from each other, but also as means of uniting them ; not merely as baths and for all purposes of washing and cleansing, but also as reservoirs of fish, as high-roads for the conveyance of commodities, as permanent sources of agricultural fertility, &c. In like manner, a mystery of any sort, having a public reference, may be pre-

sumed to couch within it a secondary and a profounder interpretation. The reader may think that the Sphinx ought to have understood her own riddle best ; and that, if *she* were satisfied with the answer of Oedipus, it must be impertinent in us at this time of day to censure it. To censure, indeed, is more than we propose. The solution of Oedipus was a true one ; and it was all that he *could* have given in that early period of his life. But, perhaps, at the moment of his death amongst the gloomy thickets of Attica, he might have been able to suggest another and a better. If not, then we have the satisfaction of thinking ourselves somewhat less dense than Oedipus ; for, in our opinion, the full and *final* answer to the Sphinx's riddle lay in the word OEDIPUS. Oedipus himself it was that fulfilled the conditions of the enigma. He it was, in the most pathetic sense, that went upon four feet when an infant ; for the general condition of helplessness attached to all mankind in the period of infancy, and which is expressed symbolically by this image of creeping, applied to Oedipus in a far more significant manner, as one abandoned by all his natural protectors, thrown upon the chances of a wilderness, and upon the mercies of a slave. The allusion to this general helplessness had, besides, a special propriety in the case of Oedipus, who drew his very name (*Swollen-foot*) from the injury done to his infant feet. He, again, it was that, in a more emphatic sense than usual, asserted that majestic self-sufficientness and independence of all alien aid, which is typified by the act of walking upright at noonday upon his own natural basis. Throwing off all the power and

splendor borrowed from his royal protectors at Corinth, trusting exclusively to his native powers as a man, he had fought his way through insult to the presence of the dreadful Sphinx; her he had confounded and vanquished; he had leaped into a throne,—the throne of him who had insulted him,—without other resources than such as he drew from himself, and he had, in the same way, obtained a royal bride. With good right, therefore, he was foreshadowed in the riddle as one who walked upright by his own masculine vigor, and relied upon no gifts but those of nature. Lastly, by a sad but a pitying image, Oedipus is described as supporting himself at nightfall on three feet; for Oedipus it was that by his cruel sons would have been rejected from Thebes, with no auxiliary means of motion or support beyond his own languishing powers: blind and broken-hearted, he must have wandered into snares and ruin; his own feet must have been supplanted immediately: but then came to his aid another foot, the holy Antigone. She it was that guided and cheered him, when all the world had forsaken him; she it was that already, in the vision of the cruel Sphinx, had been prefigured dimly as the staff upon which Oedipus should lean, as the *third* foot that should support his steps when the deep shadows of his sunset were gathering and settling about his grave.

In this way we obtain a solution of the Sphinx's riddle more commensurate and symmetrical with the other features of the story, which are all clothed with the grandeur of mystery. The Sphinx herself is a mystery. Whence came her monstrous nature

hat so often renewed its remembrance amongst men
of distant lands, in Egyptian or Ethiopian marble? Whence came her wrath against Thebes? This wrath, how durst it tower so high as to measure itself against the enmity of a nation? This wrath, how came it to sink so low as to collapse at the echo of a word from a friendless stranger? Mysterious again is the blind collusion of this unhappy stranger with the dark decrees of fate. The very misfortunes of his infancy had given into his hands one chance more for escape: these misfortunes had transferred him to Corinth, and staying *there* he was safe. But the headstrong haughtiness of youthful blood causes him to recoil unknowingly upon the one sole spot of all the earth where the coëfficients for ratifying his destruction are waiting and lying in ambush. Heaven and earth are silent for a generation: one might fancy that they are *treacherously* silent, in order that Oedipus may have time for building up to the clouds the pyramid of his mysterious offences. His four children, incestuously born, sons that are his brothers, daughters that are his sisters, have grown up to be men and women, before the first mutterings are becoming audible of that great tide slowly coming up from the sea, which is to sweep away himself and the foundations of his house. Heaven and earth must now bear joint witness against him. Heaven speaks first: the pestilence that walketh in darkness is made the earliest minister of the discovery,—the pestilence it is, scourging the seven-gated Thebes, as very soon the Sphinx will scourge her, that is appointed to usher in, like some great ceremonial herald, that sad drama of Nemesis,—that vast pro-

cession of revelation and retribution which the earth, and the graves of the earth, must finish. Mysterious also is the pomp of ruin with which this revelation of the past descends upon that ancient house of Thebes. Like a shell from modern artillery, it leaves no time for prayer or evasion, but shatters by the same explosion all that stand within its circle of fury. Every member of that devoted household, as if they had been sitting—not around a sacred domestic hearth, but around the crater of some surging volcano—all alike, father and mother, sons and daughters, are wrapt at once in fiery whirlwinds of ruin. And, amidst this general agony of destroying wrath, one central mystery, as a darkness within a darkness, withdraws itself into a secrecy unapproachable by eyesight, or by filial love, or by guesses of the brain—and *that* is the death of Oedipus. *Did he die?* Even *that* is more than we can say. How dreadful does the sound fall upon the heart of some poor, horror-stricken criminal, pirate or murderer, that has offended by a mere human offence, when, at nightfall, tempted by the sweet spectacle of a peaceful hearth, he creeps stealthily into some village inn, and hopes for one night's respite from his terror, but suddenly feels the touch, and hears the voice, of the stern officer, saying, “Sir, you are wanted.” Yet that summons is but too intelligible; it shocks, but it bewilders not; and the utmost of its malice is bounded by the scaffold. “Deep,” says the unhappy man, “is the downward path of anguish which I am called to tread; but it has been trodden by others.” For Oedipus there was no such comfort. What language of man or

trumpet of angel could decipher the woe of that unfathomable call, when, from the depth of ancient woods, a voice that drew like gravitation, that sucked in like a vortex, far off yet near, in some distant world yet close at hand, cried, "Hark, O Edipus! King Oedipus! come hither! thou art wanted!" *Wanted!* for what? Was it for death? was it for judgment? was it for some wilderness of pariah eternities? No man ever knew. Chasms opened in the earth; dark gigantic arms stretched out to receive the king; clouds and vapor settled over the penal abyss; and of him only, though the neighborhood of his disappearance was known, no trace or visible record survived—neither bones, nor grave, nor dust, nor epitaph.

Did the Sphinx follow with her cruel eye this fatal tissue of calamity to its shadowy crisis at Colonus? As the billows closed over her head, did she perhaps attempt to sting with her dying words? Did she say, "I, the daughter of mystery, am *called*; I am *wanted*. But, amidst the uproar of the sea, and the clangor of sea-birds, high over all I hear another though a distant summons. I can hear that thou, Oedipus, the son of mystery, art *called* from afar: thou also wilt be *wanted*." Did the wicked Sphinx labor in vain, amidst her parting convulsions, to breathe this freezing whisper into the heart of him that had overthrown her?

Who can say? Both of these enemies were pariah mysteries, and may have faced each other again with blazing malice in some pariah world. But all things in this dreadful story ought to be harmonized. Already in itself it is an ennobling and an idealizing

of the riddle, that it is made a double riddle ; that it contains an exoteric sense obvious to all the world, but also an esoteric sense—now suggested conjecturally after thousands of years—possibly unknown to the Sphinx, and *certainly* unknown to Oedipus ; that this second riddle is hid within the first ; that the one riddle is the secret commentary upon the other ; and that the earliest is the hieroglyphic of the last. Thus far as regards the riddle itself ; and, as regards Oedipus in particular, it exalts the mystery around him, that in reading this riddle, and in tracing the vicissitudes from infancy to old age, unconsciously he was tracing the dreadful vicissitudes attached specially and separately to his own.

AELIUS LAMIA.*

FOR a period of centuries there has existed an enigma, dark and insoluble as that of the Sphinx, in the text of Suetonius. Isaac Casaubon, as modest as he was learned, had vainly besieged it: then, in a mood of revolting arrogance, Joseph Scaliger; Ernesti; Gronovius: many others: and all without a gleam of success. Had the tread-mill been awarded (as might have been wished) to failure of attempts at solution, under the construction of having traded in false hopes—*in smoke-selling*, as the Roman law entitled it—one and all of these big-wigs must have mounted that aspiring machine of Tantalus, *nolentes volentes*.

* In this case I acknowledge no shadow of doubt. I have a list of conjectural decipherings applied by classical doctors to desperate lesions and abscesses in the text of famous classic authors; and I am really ashamed to say that my own emendation stands *facile princeps* among them all. I must repeat, however, that this preëminence is only that of luck; and I must remind the critic, that, in judging of this case, he must not do as one writer did on the first publication of this little paper—namely, entirely lose sight of the main incident in the legend of Orpheus and Eurydice. Never perhaps on this earth was so threatening a whisper, a whisper so portentously significant, uttered between man and man in a single word, as in that secret suggestion of an *Orpheutic voice* where a wife was concerned.

The passage in Suetonius which so excruciatingly (but so unprofitably) has tormented the wits of such scholars as have sat in judgment upon it through a period of three hundred and fifty years, arises in the tenth section of his Domitian. That prince, it seems, had displayed in his outset considerable promise of moral excellence ; in particular, neither rapacity nor cruelty was then apparently any feature in his character. Both qualities, however, found a pretty large and early development in his advancing career, but cruelty the largest and earliest. By way of illustration, Suetonius rehearses a list of distinguished men, clothed with senatorian or even consular rank, whom he had put to death upon allegations the most frivolous ; amongst them, Aelius Lamia, a nobleman whose wife he had torn from him by open and insulting violence. It may be as well to cite the exact words of Suetonius : * “*Aelium Lamiam (interemit) ob suspiciosos quidem, verum et veteres et innoxios jocos ; quòd post abductam uxorem laudanti vocem suam — dixerat, Heu taceo ; quòdque Tito hortanti se ad alterum matrimonium, responderat μὴ και σὺ γαμήσου θέλεις ;*” — *Anglicè*, Aelius Lamia he put to death on account of certain jests ; jests

* The original Latin seems singularly careless. Every (even though inattentive) reader says — *Innoxios*, harmless ? But if these jests were harmless, how could he call them *suspiciosos* calculated to rouse suspicion ? The way to justify the drift of Suetonius in reconcilement with his precise words is thus — on account of certain repartees which undeniably had borne a sense justifying some uneasiness and jealousy at the time of utterance, but which the event had shown to be practically harmless, what ever had been the intention, and which were now obsolete.

liable to some jealousy, but, on the other hand, of old standing, and that had in fact proved harmless as regarded practical consequences — namely, that to one who praised his voice as a singer he had replied, *Heu taceo*; and that, on another occasion, in reply to the Emperor Titus, when urging him to a second marriage, he had said, “What now, I suppose *you* are looking out for a wife?”

The latter jest is intelligible enough, stinging, and in a high degree witty. As if the young men of the Flavian family could fancy no wives but such as they had won by violence from other men, he affects in a bitter sarcasm to take for granted that Titus, in counselling his friends to marry, was simply contemplating the first step towards creating a fund of eligible wives. The primal qualification of any lady as a consort being, in Flavian eyes, that she had been torn away violently from a friend, it became evident that the preliminary step towards a Flavian wedding was, to persuade some incautious friend into marrying, and thus putting himself into a capacity of being robbed. Such, at least in the stinging jest of Lamia, was the Flavian rule of conduct. And his friend Titus, therefore, simply as the brother of Domitian, simply as a Flavian, he affected to regard as indirectly and provisionally extending his own conjugal fund, whenever he prevailed on a friend to select a wife.

The latter jest, therefore, when once apprehended, speaks broadly and bitingly for itself. But the other, — what can it possibly mean? For centuries has that question been reiterated; and hitherto with-

out advancing by one step nearer to solution. Isaac Casaubon, who about two hundred and fifty years since was the leading oracle in this field of literature, writing an elaborate and continuous commentary upon Suetonius, found himself unable to suggest any real aids for dispersing the thick darkness overhanging the passage. What he says is this : “ Parum satisfaciunt mihi interpres in explicatione hujus Lamiæ dicti. Nam quod putant *Heu taceo* susprium esse ejus — indicem doloris ob abductam uxorem magni sed latentis, nobis non ita videtur ; sed notatam potius fuisse tyrannidem principis, qui omnia in suo genere pulchra et excellentia possessoribus eriperet, unde necessitas incumbebat sua bona dissimulandi celandique.” In English thus : Not at all satisfactory to me are the commentators in the explanation of the *dictum* (here equivalent to *dicterium*) of Lamia. For, whereas they imagine *Heu taceo* to be a sigh of his, — the record and indication of a sorrow, great though concealed, on behalf of the wife that had been violently torn away from him, — me, I confess, the case does not strike in that light ; but rather that a satiric blow was aimed at the despotism of the sovereign prince, who tore away from their possessors all objects whatsoever marked by beauty or distinguished merit in their own peculiar class ; whence arose a pressure of necessity for dissembling and hiding their own advantages. “ *Sic esse exponendum,*” that such is the true interpretation (continues Casaubon,) “ *docent illa verba [LAUDANTI VOCEM SUAM]* ” (we are instructed by these words), [to one who praised his singing voice, &c]

This commentary was obscure enough, and did no particular honor to the native good sense of Isaac Casaubon, usually so conspicuous. For, whilst proclaiming a settlement, in reality it settled nothing. Naturally, it made but a feeble impression upon the scholars of the day ; and not long after the publication of the book, Casaubon received from Joseph Scaliger a friendly but gasconading letter, in which that great scholar brought forward a new reading — namely, *εὐτακτιων*, to which he assigned a profound technical value as a musical term. No person even affected to understand Scaliger. Casaubon himself, while treating so celebrated a man with kind and considerate deference, yet frankly owned that, in all his vast reading, he had never met with this Greek word in such a sense. But, without entering into any dispute upon that verbal question, and conceding to Scaliger the word and his own interpretation of the word, no man could understand in what way this new resource was meant to affect the ultimate question at issue — namely, the extrication of the passage from that thick darkness which overshadowed it.

“*As you were*” (to speak in the phraseology of military drill), was in effect the word of command. All things reverted to their original condition : and two centuries of darkness again enveloped this unsolved or insoluble perplexity of Roman literature. The darkness had for a few moments seemed to be unsettling itself in preparation for flight ; but immediately it rolled back again ; and through seven generations of men this darkness was heavier, because

now loaded with disappointment, and in that degree less hopeful than before.

At length then, I believe, all things are ready for the explosion of a catastrophe: "Which catastrophe," I hear some malicious reader whispering, "is doubtless destined to glorify himself" (meaning the unworthy writer of this little paper). I cannot deny it. A truth *is* a truth. And, since no medal, nor ribbon, nor cross of any known order, is disposable for the most brilliant successes in dealing with desperate (or what may be called *condemned*) passages in pagan literature, — mere sloughs of despond that yawn across the pages of many a heathen dog, poet and orator, that I could mention, — so much the more reasonable it is that a large allowance should be served out of boasting and self-glorification to all those whose merits upon this field national governments have neglected to proclaim. The Scaligers, both father and son, I believe, acted upon this doctrine; and drew largely by anticipation upon that reversionary bank which they conceived to be answerable for such drafts. Joseph Scaliger, it strikes me, was drunk when he wrote his letter on the present occasion, and in that way failed to see (what Casaubon saw clearly enough) that he had commenced shouting before he was out of the wood. For my own part, if I go so far as to say that the result promises, in the Frenchman's phrase, "to cover me with glory," I beg the reader to remember that the idea of "covering" is of most variable extent. The glory may envelop one in a voluminous robe, a princely mantle that may require a long suite

of train-bearers, or may pinch and vice one's arms into that succinct garment (now superannuated) which some eighty years ago drew its name from the distinguished Whig family in England of Spencer.

All being now ready, and the arena being cleared of competitors (for I suppose it is fully understood that everybody but myself has retired from the contest), let it be clearly understood what it is that the contest turns upon. Supposing that one had been called, like Oedipus of old, to a turn-up with that venerable girl the Sphinx, most essential it would have been that the clerk of the course (or however you designate the judge, the umpire, &c.) should have read the riddle propounded : how else judge of the solution ? At present the elements of the case to be decided stand thus :

A Roman noble, a man in fact of senatorial rank, has been robbed, robbed with violence, and with cruel scorn, of a lovely young wife, to whom he was most tenderly attached. But by whom ? the indignant reader demands. By a younger son* of the

* But holding what rank, and what precise station, at the time of the outrage ? At this point I acknowledge a difficulty. The criminal was in this case Domitian, the younger son of the tenth Cæsar, namely, of Vespasian ; 2dly, younger brother of Titus, the eleventh Cæsar ; and himself, 3dly, under the name of Domitian, the twelfth of the Cæsars. Now, the difficulty lies here, which yet I have never seen noticed in any book : was this violence perpetrated before or after Domitian's assumption of the purple ? If *after*, how, then, could the injured husband have received that advice from Titus (as to repairing his loss by a second marriage), which suggested the earliest *bon-mot* between Titus and Lamia .

Roman Emperor Vespasian. For some years the wrong has been borne in silence. The sufferer knew himself to be powerless as against such an oppressor ; and that to show symptoms of impotent hatred was but to call down thunderbolts upon his own head. Generally, therefore, prudence had guided him. *Patience* had been the word ; *silence*, and below all, the deep, deep word, *watch and wait !* It is, however, an awful aggravation of such afflictions, that the lady herself might have coöperated in the later stages of the tragedy with the purposes of the imperial ruffian. Lamia had been suffered to live, because, as a living man, he yielded up into the hands of his tormentor his whole capacity of suffering ; no part of it escaped the hellish range of his enemy's eye. But this advantage for the torturer had also

Yet, again, if not after but before, how was it that Lamia had not invoked the protection of Vespasian, or of Titus — the latter of whom enjoyed a theatrically fine reputation for equity and moderation ? By the way, another *bon-mot* arose out of this brutal Domitian's evil reputation. He had a taste for petty cruelties ; especially upon the common house-fly, which, in the Syrian mythology, enjoys the condescending patronage of the god Belzebub. Flies did Cæsar massacre, in spite of Belzebub, by bushels ; and the carnage was the greater, because this Apollyon of flies was always armed ; since the metallic *stylus*, with which the Roman ploughed his waxen tablets in writing memoranda, was the best of weapons in a pitched battle with a fly ; in fact, Cæsar had an unfair advantage. Meantime this habit of his had become notorious ; and one day a man, wishing for a private audience, inquired in the antechambers if Cæsar were alone ? *Quite alone, was the reply.* “Are you sure ? Is nobody with him ?” *No body : not so much as a fly (ne musca quidam).*

its weak and doubtful side. Use and monotony might secretly be wearing away the edge of the organs on and through which the corrosion of the inner heart proceeded. And when that point was reached—a callousness which neutralized the further powers of the tormentor—it then became the true policy of such a fiend (as being his one sole unexhausted resource) to inflict death. On the whole, therefore, putting together the facts of the case, it seems to have been resolved that he should die; but previously that he should drink off a final cup of anguish, the bitterest that had yet been offered. The lady herself, again, had she also suffered in sympathy with her martyred husband? That must have been known to a certainty in the outset of the case by him that knew too profoundly on what terms of love they had lived. Possibly to resist indefinitely might have menaced herself with ruin, whilst offering no benefit to her husband. There is besides this dreadful fact, placed ten thousand times on record, that the very goodness of the human heart in such a case ministers fuel to the moral degradation of a female combatant. Any woman, and exactly in proportion to the moral sensibility of her nature, finds it painful to live in the same house with a man not odiously repulsive in manners or in person on terms of eternal hostility. What it was circumstantially that passed, long since has been overtaken and swallowed up by the vast oblivions of time. This only survives—namely, that what Lamia had said gave signal offence in the highest quarter, was not forgotten, and that his death followed eventually. But what was it that he *did*

say? That is precisely the question, and the whole question which we have to answer. At present we know, and we do *not* know, what it was that he said. We find bequeathed to us by history the munificent legacy of two words — involving eight letters — which in their present form, with submission to certain grandes of classic literature, more particularly to the scoundrel Joe Scaliger (son of the old original ruffian, J. C. Scaliger), mean exactly nothing. These two words must be regarded as the raw material upon which we have to work ; and out of these we are required to turn out a rational, but also, be it observed, a memorably caustic saying for Aelius Lamia, under the following five conditions : First, it must allude to his wife, as one that is lost to him irrecoverably ; secondly, it must glance at a gloomy tyrant who bars him from rejoining her ; thirdly, it must reply to the compliment which had been paid to the sweetness of his own voice ; fourthly, it should in strictness contain some allusion calculated not only to irritate, but even to alarm or threaten his jealous and vigilant enemy, else how was it suspicious ? fifthly, doing all these things, it ought also to absorb, as its own main elements, the eight letters contained in the present senseless words — “*Heu taceo.*”

Herc is a monstrous quantity of work to throw upon any two words in any possible language. Even Shakspeare’s clown,* when challenged to furnish a catholic answer applicable to all conceivable

* See *All’s Well that Ends Well*, Act ii., Scene 2

occasions, cannot do it in less than nine letters, namely, *O lord, sir!* I, for my part, satisfied that the existing form of *Heu taceo* was mere indictable and punishable nonsense, but yet that this nonsense must enter as chief element into the stinging sense of Lamia, gazed for I cannot tell how many weeks (weeks, indeed! say years) at these impregnable letters, viewing them sometimes as a fortress that I was called upon to escalade, sometimes as an anagram that I was called upon to reorganize into the life which it had lost through some dislocation of arrangement. One day I looked at it through a microscope; next day I looked at it from a distance through a telescope. Then I reconnoitred it downwards from the top round of a ladder; then upwards, in partnership with Truth, from the bottom of a well. Finally, the result in which I landed, and which fulfilled all the conditions laid down, was this: Let me premise, however, what *at any rate* the existing darkness attests, that some disturbance of the text must in some way have arisen, whether from the gnawing of a rat, or the spilling of some obliterating fluid at this point of some unique MS. It is sufficient for us that the vital word has survived. I suppose, therefore, that Lamia had replied to the friend who praised the sweetness of his voice, "Sweet, is it? Ah, would to Heaven it might prove *so sweet as to be even Orpheutic!*" Ominous in this case would be the word *Orpheutic* to the ears of Domitian; for every schoolboy knows that this means a *wife-revoking voice*. Let me remark that there is such a legitimate word as *Orpheutaceam*;

and in that case the Latin repartee of Lamia would stand thus : *Suavem dixisti? Quam vellem et Orpheutaceam.* But, perhaps, reader, you fail to recognize in this form our old friend *Heu taceo*. But here he is to a certainty, in spite of the rats ; and in a different form of letters the compositor will show him up to you, as *vellem et Orp [HEU TACEAM]*. Here, then, shines out at once, (1) Eurydice the lovely wife ; (2) detained by the gloomy tyrant 'luto ; (3) who, however, is forced into surrendering her to her husband, whose voice (the sweetest ever known) drew stocks and stones to follow him, and finally his wife ; (4) the word Orpheutic involves, therefore, an alarming threat, showing that the hope of recovering the lady still survived ; (5) we now find ~~in~~ clued in the restoration all the eight, or perhaps nine, letters of the erroneous (and for so long a time ~~in~~ ~~undiscovered~~) form.

NOTES.

NOTE 1. Page 9.

"A million and a half," which was the true numerical return of population from the English capital about twenty years back, when this paper was written. At present, and for some time, it has stood at two millions *plus* as many thousands as express the days of a solar year. But, if adjusted to meet the corrections due upon the annual growths of the people, in that case the true return must now (viz., January of the year 1859) show a considerable excess beyond two, and a half millions. Do we mean to assert, then, that the ancient Rome of the Caesars, that mighty ancestral forerunner of the *Papal* Rome, which, in this year 1859, counts about 180,000 citizens (or, in fact, above Edinburgh by a trifle ; by 200,000 below Glasgow ; by 150,000 below Manchester), did in reality ever surmount numerically the now awful London ? Is that what we mean ? Yes ; that is what we mean. We must remember the prodigious *area* which Rome stretched over. We must remember that feature in the Roman domestic architecture (so impressively insisted on by the rhetorician Aristides), in which the ancient Rome resembled the ancient Edinburgh, and so far greatly eclipsed London, viz., the vast ascending series of stories, laying stratum upon stratum, tier upon tier, of men and women, as in some mighty theatre of human hives. Not that London is deficient in thousands of lofty streets ; but the stories rarely ascend beyond the fourth, or, at most, the fifth ; whereas the old Rome and the old Edinburgh counted at intervals by sevens or even tens. This element in the calculation being allowed for, perhaps the four millions of Lipsius may seem a reasonable population for the flourishing days of *Cæsarian* Rome, which ran far ahead of Republican Rome. On this assumption, Rome will take the *first* place,

London (as it now is) the *second*, Paris (of to-day) the *third*, New York (800,000), and probably the ancient Alexandria, the *fourth* places on the world's register of mighty metropolitan cities. Babylon and Nineveh are too entirely within the exaggerating influences of misty traditions and nursery fables, like the vapoury exhalations of the *Fata Morgana* — a species of delusion resting upon a primary basis of reality, but repeating this reality so often, through endless self-multiplication, by means of optical reflection and refraction, that the final result is little better than absolute fiction. And universally with regard to Asiatic cities (above all, with regard to Chinese cities), the reader must carry with him these cautions:—

1*st*, That Asiatics, with rare exceptions, have little regard for truth: by habit and policy they are even more mendacious than they are perfidious. Fidelity to engagements, sincerity, and disinterested veracity, rank, in Oriental estimates, as the perfection of idiocy.

2*d*, That, having no *liberal* curiosity, the Chinese man never troubles his head about the statistical circumstances of his own city, province, or natal territory. Such researches he would regard as ploughing the sands of the sea-shore, or counting the waves.

3*d*, That two grounds of falsification being thus laid, in (A) the ostentatious mendacity, and (B) which glories in its own blindness, the ignorance of all those who ought to be authorities upon such questions, a third ground arises naturally from the peculiar and special character of Eastern cities, which, for all European ears, too readily aids in misleading. Too often such cities are improvised by means of mud, turf, light spars, canvas, &c. Hibernian cabins, Scotch bothies (which word is radically the same as the *booth* of English fairs), hovels for sheltering cattle from the weather,— or buildings of a similar style and fugitive make-shift character, under the hurried workmanship of three or four hundred thousand men, run up within a single forenoon a perishable town that meets the necessities of a southern climate. Schiller, in his "*Wallenstein*," sketches such a light canvas town as the hurried *extempore* creation of soldiers. Schiller's description is a sketch; and such a military creation

is itself but a sketch of a regular and finished town. Military by its first outline and suggestion, such a frail scenical town always retains its military make-shift character ; and is, in fact, to the very last, an encampment of gipsies or migrating travellers, rather than an architectural residence of settlers who have ceased from vagrancy. Even as an *improvised* home, such a stage mimicry of a city could find toleration only in a warm climate. But such a climate, and such slender masquerading abodes, are found throughout the Northern Tropic in the southern regions of Asia.

NOTE 2. Page 10.

Or even of modern wit; witness the vain attempt of so many eminent *scribi*, and illustrious *Antecessors*, to explain in self-consistency the differing functions of the Roman Cæsar, and in what sense he was *legibus solutus*.

NOTE 3. Page 12.

‘*Nameless city.*’ — The true name of Rome it was a point of religion to conceal; and, in fact, it was never revealed.

NOTE 4. Page 16.

This we mention, because a great error has been sometimes committed in exposing *their* error, that consisted, not in supposing that for a fifth time men were to be gathered under one sceptre, and that sceptre wielded by Jesus Christ, but in supposing that this great era had then arrived, or that with no deeper moral revolution men could be fitted for that yoke.

NOTE 5. Page 20.

‘*Of ancient days.*’ — For it is remarkable, and it serves to mark an indubitable progress of mankind, that, before the Christian era, famines were of frequent occurrence in countries the most civilized; afterwards they became rare, and latterly have entirely altered their character into occasional dearths.

NOTE 6. Page 20.

Unless that hand were her own armed against herself; upon which topic there is a burst of noble eloquence in one of the ancient Panegyrici, when haranguing the Emperor Theodosius:— ‘Thou, Rome! that, having once suffered by the madness of Cinna, and of the cruel Marius raging from banishment, and of Sylla, that won his wreath of prosperity from thy disasters, and of Cæsar, compassionate to the dead, didst shudder at every blast of the trumpet filled by the breath of civil commotion,— thou, that, besides the wreck of thy soldiery perishing on either side, didst bewail, amongst thy spectacles of domestic woe, the luminaries of thy senate extinguished, the heads of thy consuls fixed upon a halberd, weeping for ages over thy self-slaughtered Catos, thy headless Ciceros (*truncosque Cicerones*), and unburied Pompeys,— to whom the party madness of thy own children had wrought in every age heavier woe than the Carthaginian thundering at thy gates, or the Gaul admitted within thy walls; on whom OEMathia, more fatal than the day of Allia,— Collina, more dismal than Cannæ,— had inflicted such deep memorials of wounds, that, from bitter experience of thy own valor, no enemy was to thee so formidable as thyself;— thou, Rome! didst now for the first time behold a civil war issuing in a hallowed prosperity, a soldiery appeased, recovered Italy, and for thyself liberty established. Now first in thy long annals thou didst rest from a civil war in such a peace, that righteously, and with maternal tenderness, thou mightst claim for it the honors of a civic triumph.’

NOTE 7. Page 23.

The fact is, that the emperor was more of a sacred and divine creature in his lifetime than after his death. His consecrated character as a living ruler was a truth; his canonization, a fiction of tenderness to his memory.

NOTE 8. Page 38.

It is an interesting circumstance in the habits of the ancient Romans, that their journeys were pursued very much in the night-time, and by torch-light. Cicero, in one of his letters speaks of passing through the towns of Italy by night, as a ser-

viewable scheme for some political purpose, either of avoiding too much to publish his motions, or of evading the necessity (else perhaps not avoidable), of drawing out the party sentiments of the magistrates in the circumstances of honor or neglect with which they might choose to receive him. His words, however, imply that the practice was by no means an uncommon one. And, indeed, from some passages in writers of the Augustan era, it would seem that this custom was not confined to people of distinction, but was familiar to a class of travellers so low in rank as to be capable of abusing their opportunities of concealment for the infliction of wanton injury upon the woods and fences which bounded the margin of the high-road. Under the cloud of night and solitude, the mischief-loving traveller was often in the habit of applying his torch to the withered boughs of woods, or to artificial hedges; and extensive ravages by fire, such as now happen not unfrequently in the American woods, (but generally from carelessness in scattering the glowing embers of a fire, or even the ashes of a pipe,) were then occasionally the result of mere wantonness of mischief. Ovid accordingly notices, as one amongst the familiar images of daybreak, the half-burnt torch of the traveller; and, apparently, from the position which it holds in his description, where it is ranked with the most familiar of all circumstances in all countries,—that of the rural laborer going out to his morning tasks,—it must have been common indeed :

‘Semiustamque facem vigilatâ nocte viator
Ponet; et ad solitum rusticus ibit opus.’

This occurs in the *Fasti*;—elsewhere he notices it for its danger :

‘Ut facibus sepes ardent, cum forte viator
Vel nimis admovit, vel jam sub luce reliquit.’

He, however, we see, good-naturedly ascribes the danger to mere carelessness, in bringing the torch too near to the hedge, or tossing it away at daybreak. But Varro, a more matter-of-fact observer, does not disguise the plain truth, that these disasters were often the product of pure malicious frolic. For instance, in recommending a certain kind of quickset fence, he insists upon it, as one of its advantages, that it will not readily ignite under the

torch of the mischievous wayfarer; ‘Naturale sepimentum,’ says he, ‘quod obseri solet virgultis aut spinis, *prætereuntis luscivis non metuet facem.’* It is not easy to see the origin or advantages of this practice of nocturnal travelling (which must have considerably increased the hazards of a journey), excepting only in the heats of summer. It is probable, however, that men of high rank and public station may have introduced the practice by way of releasing corporate bodies in large towns from the burdensome ceremonies of public receptions; thus making a compromise between their own dignity and the convenience of the provincial public. Once introduced, and the arrangements upon the road for meeting the wants of travellers once adapted to such a practice, it would easily become universal. It is, however, very possible that mere horror of the heats of day-time may have been the original ground for it. The ancients appear to have shrunk from no hardship so trying and insufferable as that of heat. And in relation to that subject, it is interesting to observe the way in which the ordinary use of language has accommodated itself to that feeling. Our northern way of expressing effeminacy is derived chiefly from the hardships of cold. He that shrinks from the trials and rough experience of real life in any department, is described by the contemptuous prefix of *chimney-corner*, as if shrinking from the cold which he would meet on coming out into the open air amongst his fellow-men. Thus, a *chimney-corner* politician, for a mere speculator or unpractical dreamer. But the very same indolent habit of aerial speculation, which courts no test of real life and practice, is described by the ancients under the term *umbracticus*, or seeking the cool shade, and shrinking from the heat. Thus, an *umbracticus doctor* is one who has no practical solidity in his teaching. The fatigue and hardship of real life, in short, is represented by the ancients under the uniform image of heat, and by the moderns under that of cold.

NOTE 9. Page 41.

According to Suetonius, the circumstances of this memorable night were as follows:—As soon as the decisive intelligence was received, that the intrigues of his enemies had prevailed at Rome and that the interposition of the popular magistrates (the tribunes) was set aside, Cæsar sent forward the troops, who were

then at his head-quarters, but in as private a manner as possible. He himself, by way of masque (*per dissimulationem*), attended a public spectacle, gave an audience to an architect who wished to lay before him a plan for a school of gladiators which Cæsar designed to build, and finally presented himself at a banquet, which was very numerously attended. From this, about sunset, he set forward in a carriage, drawn by mules, and with a small escort (*modico comitatu*). Losing his road, which was the most private he could find (*occultissimum*), he quitted his carriage and proceeded on foot. At dawn he met with a guide; after which followed the above incidents.

NOTE 10. Page 51.

Middleton's Life of Cicero, which still continues to be the most readable digest of these affairs, is feeble and contradictory. He discovers that Cæsar was no general! And the single merit which his work was supposed to possess, viz. the better and more critical arrangement of Cicero's Letters, in respect to their chronology, has of late years been detected as a robbery from the celebrated Bellenden, of James the First's time.

NOTE 11. Page 55.

Suetonius, speaking of this conspiracy, says, that Cæsar was *nominatus inter socios Catilinæ*, which has been erroneously understood to mean that he was *talked of* as an accomplice; but in fact, as Casaubon first pointed out, *nominatus* is a technical term of the Roman jurisprudence, and means that he was formally denounced.

NOTE 12. Page 59.

“*Tall:*” — Whereas, to show the lawless caprices upon which French writers have endeavoured to found a brief notoriety, one contributor to the memoirs of *L'Académie des Inscriptions*, expressly asserts, without a vestige of countenance from any authority whatsoever, that Cæsar was “several feet high,” but being “invited” to circumstantiate, replied, “five feet nothing;” but this being French measure, would give him (if we rightly remember the French scale), about five times three-fourths of an inch more. Nonsense. Suetonius, who stood so near to the Julian generation, is guarantee for his *proceritas*.

NOTE 13. Page 64

Cæsar had the merit of being the first person to propose the daily publication of the acts and votes of the senate. In the form of public and official despatches, he made also some useful innovations; and it may be mentioned, for the curiosity of the incident, that the cipher which he used in his correspondence, was the following very simple one: — For every letter of the alphabet he substituted that which stood fourth removed from it in the order of succession. Thus, for A, he used D; for D, G, and so on.

NOTE 14. Page 67.

"The son:" — This is a fact which we should do well to remember more seriously than we have ever done in the cases of Indian princes claiming under this title. The miscreant Nana Sahib to all appearance was really ill-used originally by us: was he not really and truly the child by *adoption* of the Peishwah? Let us recollect that one of the Scipios, received for such by the whole Roman world, was really an *Emilian*, and a Scipio only by adoption.

NOTE 15. Page 80.

• The painful warrior, famoused for fight,
After a thousand victories once foil'd,
Is from the book of honor razed quite,
And all the rest forgot for which he toil'd.'

Shakspeare's Sonnets

NOTE 16. Page 86.

And this was entirely by the female side. The family descent of the first six Cæsars is so intricate, that it is rarely understood accurately; so that it may be well to state it briefly. Augustus was grand nephew to Julius Cæsar, being the son of his sister's daughter. He was also, by adoption, the *son* of Julius. He himself had one child only, viz. the infamous Julia, who was brought him by his second wife Scribonia; and through this Julia it was that the three princes, who succeeded to Tiberius, claimed relationship to Augustus. On that emperor's last marriage with Livia, he adopted the two sons whom she had borne to her di-

forced husband. These two noblemen, who stood in no degree of consanguinity whatever to Augustus, were Tiberius and Drusus. Tiberius left no children; but Drusus, the younger of the two brothers, by his marriage with the younger Antonia (daughter of Mark Anthony), had the celebrated Germanicus, and Claudius (afterwards emperor). Germanicus, though adopted by his uncle Tiberius, and destined to the empire, died prematurely. But, like Banquo, though he wore no crown, he left descendants who did. For, by his marriage with Agrippina, a daughter of Julia's by Agrippa (and therefore grand-daughter of Augustus), he had a large family, of whom one son became the Emperor Caligula; and one of the daughters, Agrippina the younger, by her marriage with a Roman nobleman, became the mother of the Emperor Nero. Hence it appears that Tiberius was uncle to Claudius, Claudius was uncle to Caligula, Caligula was uncle to Nero. But it is observable, that Nero and Caligula stood in another degree of consanguinity to each other through their grandmothers, who were both daughters of Mark Anthony the triumvir; for the elder Antonia married the grandfather of Nero; the younger Antonia (as we have stated above) married Drusus, the grandfather of Caligula; and again, by these two ladies, they were connected not only with each other, but also with the Julian house, for the two Antonias were daughters of Mark Anthony by Octavia, sister to Augustus.

NOTE 17. Page 96.

But a memorial stone, in its inscription, makes the time longer
‘Quando urbs per novem dies arsit Neronianis temporibus.’

NOTE 18. Page 106.

At this early hour, witnesses, sureties, &c., and all concerned in the law courts, came up to Rome from villas, country towns, &c. But no ordinary call existed to summon travellers in the opposite direction; which accounts for the comment of the travellers on the errand of Nero and his attendants.

NOTE 19. Page 113.

We may add that the unexampled public grief which followed the death of Otho, exceeding even that which followed the death

of Germanicus, and causing several officers to commit suicide, implies some remarkable goodness in this Prince, and a very unusual power of conciliating attachment.

NOTE 20. Page 117.

Blackwell, in his Court of Augustus, vol. i. p. 382, when noticing these lines, upon occasion of the murder of Cicero, in the final proscription under the last triumvirate, comments thus: ‘Those of the greatest and truly Roman spirit had been murdered in the field by Julius Cæsar : the rest were now massacred in the city by his son and successors; in their room came Syrians, Cappadocians, Phrygians, and other enfranchised slaves from the conquered nations;’ — ‘these in half a century had sunk so low, that Tiberius pronounced her very senators to be *homines ad servitutem natos*, men born to be slaves.’

NOTE 21. Page 117.

Suetonius indeed pretends that Augustus, personally at least, struggled against this ruinous practice — thinking it a matter of the highest moment, ‘Sincerum atque ab omni colluvione peregrini et servilis sanguinis incorruptum servare populum.’ And Horace is ready with his flatteries on the same topic, lib. 3, Od. 6. But the facts are against them; for the question is not what Augustus did in his own person, (which at most could not operate very widely except by the example,) but what he permitted to be done. Now there was a practice familiar to those times — that when a congiary or any other popular liberality was announced, multitudes were enfranchised by avaricious masters in order to make them capable of the bounty (as citizens), and yet under the condition of transferring to their emancipators whatsoever they should receive; *ινα τοι δημοσιως διδομένοι σιτον λαμβανοντες κατα μητρα* — φεωσι τοις δεδωκυσι την ἐλευθεριαν, says Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in order that after receiving the corn given publicly in every month, they might carry it to those who had bestowed upon them their freedom. In a case, then, where an extensive practice of this kind was exposed to Augustus, and publicly reproved by him, how did he proceed? Did he reject the new-made citizens? No; he contented himself with diminishing the proportion originally destined for each, so that the same

absolute sum being distributed among a number increased by the whole amount of the new enrolments, of necessity the relative sum for each separately was so much less. But this was a remedy applied only to the pecuniary fraud as it would have affected himself. The permanent mischief to the state went unredressed.

NOTE 22. Page 118.

Part of the story is well known, but not the whole. Tiberius Nero, a promising young nobleman, had recently married a very splendid beauty. Unfortunately for him, at the marriage of Octavia (sister to Augustus) with Mark Anthony, he allowed his young wife, then about eighteen, to attend upon the bride. Augustus was deeply and suddenly fascinated by her charms, and without further scruple sent a message to Nero — intimating that he was in love with his wife, and would thank him to resign her. The other, thinking it vain, in those days of lawless proscription, to contest a point of this nature with one who commanded twelve legions, obeyed the requisition. Upon some motive, now unknown, he was persuaded even to degrade himself farther; for he actually officiated at the marriage in character of father, and gave away the young beauty to his rival, although at that time six months advanced in pregnancy by himself. These humiliating concessions were extorted from him, and yielded (probably at the instigation of friends) in order to save his life. In the sequel they had the very opposite result; for he died soon after, and it is reasonably supposed of grief and mortification. At the marriage feast, an incident occurred which threw the whole company into confusion: A little boy, roving from couch to couch among the guests, came at length to that in which Livia (the bride) was lying by the side of Augustus, on which he cried out aloud, — ‘Lady, what are you doing here? You are mistaken — this is not your husband — he is there,’ (pointing to Tiberius,) ‘go, go — rise, lady, and recline beside him.’

NOTE 23. Page 121.

Augustus, indeed, strove to exclude the women from one part of the Circen^stion spectacles; and what was that? Simply from the sight of the *Athletæ*, as being naked. But that they should witness the pangs of the dying gladiators, he deemed quite allow-

able. The smooth barbarian considered, that a license of the first sort offended against decorum, whilst the other violated only the sanctities of the human heart, and the whole sexual character of women. It is our opinion, that to the brutalizing effect of these exhibitions we are to ascribe, not only the early extinction of the Roman drama, but generally the inferiority of Rome to Greece in every department of the fine arts. The fine temper of Roman sensibility, which no culture could have brought to the level of the Grecian, was thus dulled for *every* application.

NOTE 24. Page 130.

No fiction of romance presents so awful a picture of the ideal tyrant as that of Caligula by Suetonius. His palace — radiant with purple and gold, but murder everywhere lurking beneath flowers; his smiles and echoing laughter — masking (yet hardly meant to mask) his foul treachery of heart; his hideous and tumultuous dreams — his baffled sleep — and his sleepless nights — compose the picture of an Æschylus. What a master's sketch lies in these few lines: ‘Incitatatur insomnio maxime; neque enim plus tribus horis nocturnis quiescebat; ac ne his placidâ quiete, at pavidâ miris rerum imaginibus; ut qui inter ceteras pelagi quondam speciem colloquentem secum videre visus sit. Ideoque magna parte noctis, vigilæ cubandique tædio, nunc toro residens, nunc per longissimas porticus vagus, invocare identidem atque exspectare lucem consueverat:’ — *i. e.* ‘But, above all, he was tormented with nervous irritation, by sleeplessness; for he enjoyed not more than three hours of nocturnal repose; nor these even in pure untroubled rest, but agitated by phantas-mata of portentous augury; as, for example, upon one occasion he fancied that he saw the sea, under some definite impersonation, conversing with himself. Hence it was, and from this incapacity of sleeping, and from weariness of lying awake, that he had fallen into habits of ranging all the night long through the palace, sometimes throwing himself on a couch, sometimes wan-dering along the vast corridors, watching for the earliest dawn, and anxiously invoking its approach.

NOTE 25. Page 131.

“*The five Cæsars:*”—Namely, Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the two Antonines, Pius, and his adopted son, Marcus Aurelius.

NOTE 26. Page 132

And hence we may the better estimate the trial to a Roman's feelings in the personal deformity of baldness, connected with the Roman theory of its cause, for the exposure of it was perpetual.

NOTE 27. Page 133.

‘Expeditiones sub eo,’ says Spartian, ‘graves nullæ fuerunt. Bella etiam silentio pene transacta.’ But he does not the less add, ‘A militibus, propter curam exercitūs nimiam, multum amatus est.’

NOTE 28. Page 134.

In the true spirit of Parisian mummery, Bonaparte caused letters to be written from the War-office, in his own name, to particular soldiers of high military reputation in every brigade, (whose private history he had previously caused to be investigated,) alluding circumstantially to the leading facts in their personal or family career; a furlough accompanied this letter, and they were requested to repair to Paris, where the emperor anxiously desired to see them. Thus was the paternal interest expressed, which their leader took in each man's fortunes and the effect of every such letter, it was not doubted, would diffuse itself through ten thousand other men.

NOTE 29. Page 135.

‘*War in procinct*’—a phrase of Milton's in *Paradise Regained*, which strikingly illustrates his love of Latin phraseology; for unless to a scholar, previously acquainted with the Latin phrase of *in procinctu*, it is so absolutely unintelligible as to interrupt the current of the feeling.

NOTE 30. Page 136.

‘*Crypts*’ — these, which Spartian, in his life of Hadrian, denominates simply *cryptæ*, are the same which, in the Roman jurisprudence, and in the architectural works of the Romans, yet surviving, are termed *hypogæa deambulationes*, i. e. subterranean parades. Vitruvius treats of this luxurious class of apartments in connection with the *Apothecæ*, and other repositories or store-rooms, which were also in many cases underground, (for the same reason as our ice-houses, wine-cellars, &c. He (and from him Pliny and Apollonaris Sidonius) calls them *crypto-porticus* (cloistral colonnades); and Ulpian calls them *refugia* (sanctuaries, or places of refuge); St. Ambrose notices them under the name of *hypogæa* and *umbrosa penetralia*, as the resorts of voluptuaries : *Luxuriosorum est*, says he, *hypogæa quærere — captantium frigus aestivum*; and again he speaks of *desidiosi qui ignava sub terris agant otia*.

NOTE 31. Page 136.

‘*The topiary art*’ — so called, as Salmasius thinks, from τοπίjiov, a rope; because the process of construction was conducted chiefly by means of cords and strings. This art was much practised in the 17th century; and Casaubon describes one, which existed in his early days somewhere in the suburbs of Paris, on so elaborate a scale, that it represented Troy besieged, with the two hosts, their several leaders, and all other objects in their full proportion.

NOTE 32. Page 136.

“*Miss Linwood:*” — Alas! *Fuit Ilium*; and it has actually become necessary, in a generation that knew not Joseph, that we should tell the reader who was Miss Linwood. For many a long year between 1800 and perhaps 1835 or 1840, she had in Leicester Square, London, a most gorgeous exhibition of needle-work — arras that by its exquisite effects rivalled the works of mighty painters.

NOTE 33. Page 137.

Very remarkable it is, and a fact which speaks volumes as to the democratic constitution of the Roman army, in the midst of

that aristocracy which enveloped its parent state in a civil sense, that although there was a name for a *common soldier* (or *sentinel*, as he was termed by our ancestors) — viz. *miles gregarius*, or *miles manipularis* — there was none for an *officer*; that is to say, each several rank of officers had a name; but there was no generalization to express the idea of an officer abstracted from its several species or classes.

NOTE 34. Page 189.

Vitis: and it deserves to be mentioned, that this staff, or cudgel, which was the official engine and cognizance of the Centurion's dignity, was meant expressly to be used in caning or cudgelling the inferior soldiers. ‘*Propterea vitis in manum data*,’ says Salmasius, ‘*verberando scilicet militi qui deliquisset*.’ We are no patrons of corporal chastisement, which, on the contrary, as the vilest of degradations, we abominate. The soldier, who does not feel himself dishonored by it, is already dishonored beyond hope or redemption. But still let this degradation not be imputed to the English army exclusively.

NOTE 35. Page 145.

In the original *ter millies*, which is not much above two millions and one hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling; but it must be remembered that one third as much, in addition to this popular largess, had been given to the army.

NOTE 36. Page 145.

— ‘nam bene gesti rebus, vel potius feliciter, etsi non summi — medii tamen obtinuit ducis famam.’ For by the able, or rather by the fortunate, conduct of affairs, he won the reputation — though not of a supreme — yet of a tolerable or second class strategist.

NOTE 37. Page 146.

This, however, is a point in which royal personages claim an old prescriptive right to be unreasonable in their exactions; and some, even amongst the most humane of Christian princes, have acted as flagrantly as Ælius Verus. George IV. we have under

stood, was generally escorted from Dalkeith to Holyrood at a rate of twenty-two miles an hour. And of his father, the truly kind and paternal king, it is recorded by Miss Hawkins, (daughter of Sir J. Hawkins, the biographer of Johnson, &c.) that families who happened to have a son, brother, lover, &c. in the particular regiment of cavalry which furnished the escort for the day, used to suffer as much anxiety for the result as on the eve of a great battle.

NOTE 38. Page 150.

"He practised a mode of usury at the very lowest rates, viz., under a discount of two-thirds from the ordinary terms, so as that, from his own private patrimonial funds, he might thus relieve the greatest number possible of clients."

NOTE 39. Page 154.

And not impossibly of America ; for it must be remembered that, when we speak of this quarter of the earth as yet undiscovered, we mean — to ourselves of the western climates; since as respects the eastern quarters of Asia, doubtless America was known there familiarly enough; and the high bounties of imperial Rome on rare animals, would sometimes perhaps propagate their influence even to those regions.

NOTE 40. Page 155.

In default of whalebone, one is curious to know of what they were made : — thin tablets of the linden-tree, it appears, were the best materials which the Augustus of that day could command.

NOTE 41. Page 156.

There is, however, a good deal of delusion prevalent on such subjects. In some English cavalry regiments, the custom is for the privates to take only one meal a day, which of course is dinner; and by some curious experiments it has appeared that such a mode of life is the healthiest. But at the same time we have ascertained that the quantity of porter or substantial ale drunk in these regiments does virtually allow many meals, by comparison with the washy tea breakfasts of most Englishmen.

NOTE 42. Page 158.

We should all have been much indebted to the philosophic emperor, had he found it convenient to tell us with what result to the public interests, as also to the despatch of business. Napoleon made La Place a Secretary of State, but had reason to rue his appointment. Our own Addison suffered a kind of locked jaw in dictating despatches as foreign Secretary. And about a hundred years earlier Lord Bacon played "H—— and Tommy" when casually raised to the supreme seat in the council by the brief absence in Edinburgh of the king and the Duke of Buckingham.

NOTE 43. Page 159.

So much improvement had Christianity already accomplished in the feelings of men since the time of Augustus. That prince, in whose reign the Founder of this ennobling religion was born, had delighted so much and indulged so freely in the spectacles of the amphitheatre, that Mæcenas summoned him reproachfully to leave them, saying, ' Surge tandem, carnifex.'

It is the remark of Capitoline, that ' gladiatoria spectacula omnifariam temperavit; temperavit etiam scenicas donationes ;' — he controlled in every possible way the gladiatorial spectacles ; he controlled also the rates of allowance to the stage performers. In these latter reforms, which simply restrained the exorbitant salaries of a class dedicated to the public pleasures, and unprofitable to the State, Marcus may have had no farther view than that which is usually connected with sumptuary laws. But in the restraints upon the gladiators, it is impossible to believe that his highest purpose was not that of elevating human nature, and preparing the way for still higher regulations. As little can it be believed that this lofty conception, and the sense of a degradation entailed upon human nature itself, in the spectacle of human beings matched against each other like brute beasts, and pouring out their blood upon the arena as a libation to the caprices of a mob, could have been derived from any other source than the contagion of Christian standards and Christian sentiments, then beginning to pervade and ventilate the atmosphere of society in its higher and philosophic regions.

Christianity, without expressly affirming, everywhere indirectly supposes and presumes the infinite value and dignity of man as a creature, exclusively concerned in a vast and mysterious economy of restoration to a state of moral beauty and power in some former age mysteriously forfeited. Equally interested in its benefits, joint heirs of its promises, all men, of every color, language, and rank, Gentile or Jew, were here first represented as in one sense (and that the most important) equal; in the eye of this religion, they were, by necessity of logic, equal, as equal participants in the ruin and the restoration. Here first, in any available sense, was communicated to the standard of human nature a vast and sudden elevation; and reasonable enough it is to suppose, that some obscure sense of this, some sympathy with the great changes for man then beginning to operate, would first of all reach the inquisitive students of philosophy, and chiefly those in high stations, who cultivated an intercourse with all the men of original genius throughout the civilized world. The Emperor Hadrian had already taken a solitary step in the improvement of human nature, and not, we may believe, without some subconscious influence received directly or indirectly from Christianity. So again, with respect to Marcus, it is hardly conceivable that he, a prince so indulgent and popular, could have thwarted, and violently gainsaid, a primary impulse of the Roman populace, without some adequate motive; and none *could* be adequate which was not built upon some new and exalted views of human nature, with which these gladiatorial sacrifices were altogether at war. The reforms which Marcus introduced into these ‘cruelissima spectacula,’ all having the common purpose of limiting their extent, were three. First, he set bounds to the extreme cost of these exhibitions; and this restriction of the cost covertly operated as a restriction of the practice. Secondly,—and this ordinance took effect whenever he was personally present, if not oftener,—he commanded, on great occasions, that these displays should be bloodless. Dion Cassius notices this fact in the following words:—‘The Emperor Marcus was so far from taking delight in spectacles of bloodshed, that even the gladiators in Rome could not obtain his inspection of their contests, unless like the wrestlers, they contended without imminent risk; for he never allowed them the use of sharpened weapons, but univer-

sally they fought before him with weapons previously blunted.' Thirdly, he repealed the old and uniform regulation, which secured to the gladiators a perpetual immunity from military service. This necessarily diminished their available amount. Being now liable to serve their country usefully in the field of battle, whilst the concurrent limitation of the expenses in this direction prevented any proportionate increase of their numbers, they were so much the less disposable in aid of the public luxury. His fatherly care of all classes, and the universal benignity with which he attempted to raise the abject estimate and condition of even the lowest *Pariahs* in his vast empire, appears in another little anecdote, relating to a class of men equally with the gladiators given up to the service of luxury in a haughty and cruel populace. Attending one day at an exhibition of rope-dancing, one of the performers (a boy) fell and hurt himself; from which time the paternal emperor would never allow the rope-dancers to perform without mattresses or feather-beds spread below, to mitigate the violence of their falls.

NOTE 44. Page 160.

Marcus had been associated, as Cæsar, and as emperor, with the son of the late beautiful Verus, who is usually mentioned by the same name

NOTE 45. Page 161.

"*By color:*" — It must be remembered that the true *purple* (about which the controversy has been endless, and is yet unsettled — possibly it was our *crimson*, though this seems properly expressed by the word *punicus*; possibly it was our common *violet*; but of whatever tint, this color of purple) was interdicted to the Roman people, and consecrated to the sole personal use of the imperial house. Recollecting the early "taboo" in this point amongst the children of Romulus, and that thus far it had not been suspended under the two gentlest and most philosophic princes of the *divina domus*, we feel that some injustice has, perhaps, been done to Diocletian in representing him as the Importer of Oriental degradations.

NOTE 46. Page 162

"Murrhine vases:" — What might these Pagan articles be? Unlearned reader, if any such is amongst the flock of our audience, the question you ask has been asked by four or five centuries that have fledged away, and hitherto has had no answer. They were not porcelain from China; they could not be Venetian glass, into which, when poison was poured, suddenly the venom fermented, bubbled, boiled, and finally shivered the glass into fragments (so at least saith the pretty fable of our ancestors); this it *could* not be: why? Because Venice herself did not arise until two and a half centuries after Marcus Aurelius. They were however like diaphanous china, but did not break on falling. The Japanese still possess a sort of porcelain much superior to any now produced in China. And by Chinese confession, a far superior order of porcelain was long ago manufactured in China itself, of which the art is now wholly lost. Perhaps the murrhine vase might belong to this forgotten class of *vertu*.

NOTE 47. Page 163.

Because the most effectual extinguishers of all ambition applied in that direction; since the very excellence of any particular fabric was the surest pledge of its virtual suppression by means of its legal restriction (which followed inevitably) to the use of the imperial house.

NOTE 48. Page 165.

Upon which some *mimographus* built an occasional notice of the scandal then floating on the public breath in the following terms: One of the actors having asked ‘*Who was the adulterous paramour?*’ receives for answer, *Tullus*. Who? he asks again; and again for three times running he is answered, *Tullus*. But asking a fourth time, the rejoinder is, *Jam dixi ter Tullus*.

NOTE 49. Page 166.

In reality, if by *divus* and *divine honors* we understand a saint or spiritualized being having a right of intercession with the Su-

preme Deity, and by his temple, &c., if we understand a shrine attended by a priest to direct the prayers of his devotees, there is no such wide chasm between this pagan superstition and the adoration of saints in the Romish church, as at first sight appears. The fault is purely in the names : *divus* and *templum* are words too undistinguishing and generic.

NOTE 50. Page 168.

Not long after this Alexander Severus meditated a temple to Christ; upon which design Lampridius observes, — *Quod et Hadrianus cogitasse fertur*; and, as Lampridius was himself a pagan, we believe him to have been right in his report, in spite of all which has been written by Casaubon and others, who maintain that these imperfect temples of Hadrian were left void of all images or idols, — not in respect to the Christian practice, but because he designed them eventually to be dedicated to himself. However, be this as it may, thus much appears on the face of the story, — that Christ and Christianity had by that time begun to challenge the imperial attention; and of this there is an indirect indication, as it has been interpreted, even in the memoir of Marcus himself. The passage is this : ‘Fama fuit sanè quod sub philosophorum specie quidam rempublicam vexarent et privatos.’ The *philosophi*, here mentioned by Capitoline, are by some supposed to be the Christians; and for many reasons we believe it; and we understand the molestations of the public services and of private individuals, here charged upon them, as a very natural reference to the Christian doctrines falsely understood. There is, by the way, a fine remark upon Christianity, made by an infidel philosopher of Germany, which suggests a remarkable feature in the merits of Marcus Aurelius. There were, as this German philosopher used to observe, two schemes of thinking amongst the ancients, which severally fulfilled the two functions of a sound philosophy as respected the moral nature of man. One of these schemes presented us with a just ideal of moral excellence, a standard sufficiently exalted ; this was the Stoic philosophy; and thus far its pretensions were unexceptionable and perfect. But unfortunately, whilst contemplating this pure ideal of man as he ought to be the Stoic totally forgot the frail nature of man as he is; and by refusing all compromises

and all condescensions to human infirmity, this philosophy of the Porch presented to us a brilliant prize and object for our efforts, but placed on an inaccessible height.

On the other hand, there was a very different philosophy at the very antagonist pole,—not blinding itself by abstractions too elevated, submitting to what it finds, bending to the absolute facts and realities of man's nature, and affably adapting itself to human imperfections. There was the philosophy of Epicurus; and undoubtedly, as a beginning, and for the elementary purpose of conciliating the affections of the pupil, it was well devised; but here the misfortune was, that the ideal, or *maximum perfectionis*, attainable by human nature, was pitched so low, that the humility of its condescensions and the excellence of its means were all to no purpose, as leading to nothing further. One mode presented a splendid end, but insulated, and with no means fitted to a human aspirant for communicating with its splendors; the other, an excellent road, but leading to no worthy or proportionate end. Yet these, as regarded morals, were the best and ultimate achievements of the pagan world. Now Christianity, said he, is the synthesis of whatever is separately excellent in either. It will abate as little as the haughtiest Stoicism of the ideal which it contemplates as the first postulate of true morality; the absolute holiness and purity which it demands are as much raised above the poor performances of actual man, as the absolute wisdom and impeccability of the Stoic. Yet, unlike the Stoic scheme, Christianity is aware of the necessity, and provides for it, that the means of appropriating this ideal perfection should be such as are consistent with the nature of a most erring and imperfect creature. Its motion is *towards* the divine, but *by* and *through* the human. In fact, it offers the Stoic humanized in his scheme of means, and the Epicurean exalted in his final objects. Nor is it possible to conceive a practicable scheme of morals which should not rest upon such a synthesis of the two elements as the Christian scheme presents; nor any other mode of fulfilling that demand than such a one as is there first brought forward, viz., a double or Janus nature, which stands in an equivocal relation,—to the divine nature by his actual perfections, to the human nature by his participation in the same animal frailties and capacities of fleshly temptation. No other

vinculum could bind the two postulates together, of an absolute perfection in the end proposed, and yet of utter imperfection in the means for attaining it.

Such was the outline of this famous tribute by an unbelieving philosopher to the merits of Christianity as a scheme of moral discipline. Now, it must be remembered that Marcus Aurelius was by profession a Stoic; and that generally, as a theoretical philosopher, but still more as a Stoic philosopher, he might be supposed incapable of descending from these airy altitudes of speculation to the true needs, infirmities, and capacities of human nature. Yet strange it is, that he, of all the good emperors, was the most thoroughly human and practical. In evidence of which, one body of records is amply sufficient, which is, the very extensive and wise reforms which he, beyond all the Cæsars executed in the existing laws. To all the exigencies of the times, and to all the new necessities developed by the progress of society, he adjusted the old laws, or supplied new ones. The same praise, therefore, belongs to him, which the German philosopher conceded to Christianity, of reconciling the austerest ideal with the practical; and hence another argument for presuming him half baptized into the new faith.

NOTE 51. Page 170.

“*Elogiis:*” — The elogium was the public record or *titulus* of a malefactor’s crime inscribed upon his cross or scaffold.

NOTE 52. Page 175.

“*Turning against every one of his assassins:*” — It was a general belief at the time that each individual among the murderers of Cæsar had died by his own sword.

NOTE 53. Page 176.

In these words we hear the very spirit of Robespierre.

NOTE 54. Page 177.

“*Parcerent:*” — She means *pepercissent*. “Don’t,” she says, “show mercy to man that showed none to you, nor would have shown any to me or my sons in case they nad gained the victory.”

NOTE 55. Page 182.

Amongst these institutions, none appear to us so remarkable, or fitted to accomplish so prodigious a circle of purposes belonging to the highest state policy, as the Roman method of colonization. Colonies were, in effect, the great engine of Roman conquest; and the following are among a few of the great ends to which they were applied. First of all, how came it that the early armies of Rome served, and served cheerfully, without pay? Simply because all who were victorious knew that they would receive their arrears in the fullest and amplest form upon their final discharge, viz., in the shape of a colonial estate—large enough to rear a family in comfort, and seated in the midst of similar allotments, distributed to their old comrades in arms. These lands were already, perhaps, in high cultivation, being often taken from conquered tribes; but, if not, the new occupants could rely for aid of every sort, for social intercourse, and for all the offices of good neighborhood upon the surrounding proprietors—who were sure to be persons in the same circumstances as themselves, and draughted from the same legion. For be it remembered, that in the primitive ages of Rome, concerning which it is that we are now speaking, entire legions—privates and officers—were transferred in one body to the new colony. ‘Antiquitus,’ says the learned Goesius, ‘deducebantur integræ legiones, quibus parta victoria.’ Neither was there much waiting for this honorary gift. In later ages, it is true, when such resources were less plentiful, and when regular pay was given to the soldiery, it was the veteran only who obtained this splendid provision; but in the earlier times, a single fortunate campaign not seldom dismissed the young recruit to a life of ease and honor. ‘Multis legionibus,’ says Hyginus, ‘contigit bellum feliciter transigere, et ad laboriosam agriculturæ requiem primo tyrocinii gradu purvenire. Nam cum signis et aquilâ et primis ordinibus et tribunis deducebantur.’ Tacitus also notices this organization of the early colonies, and adds the reason of it, and its happy effect, when contrasting it with the vicious arrangements of the colonizing system in his own days. ‘Olim,’ says he, ‘universæ legiones deducebantur cum tribunis et centurionibus, et sui cujusque ordinis militibus, *ut consensu et charitate republicam efficerent.*’ Secondly, not only were the

troops in this way at a time when the public purse was unequal to the expenditure of war — but this pay, being contingent on the successful issue of the war, added the strength of self-interest to that of patriotism in stimulating the soldier to extraordinary efforts. *Thirdly*, not only did the soldier in this way reap his pay, but also he reaped a reward (and that besides a trophy and perpetual monument of his public services), so munificent as to constitute a permanent provision for a family; and accordingly he was now encouraged, nay, enjoined, to marry. For here was an hereditary landed estate equal to the liberal maintenance of a family. And thus did a simple people, obeying its instinct of conquest, not only discover, in its earliest days, the subtle principle of Machiavel — *Let war support war*; but (which is far more than Machiavel's view) they made each present war support many future wars — by making it support a new offset from the population, bound to the mother city by indissoluble ties of privilege and civic duties; and in many other ways they made every war, by and through the colonizing system to which it gave occasion, serviceable to future aggrandizement. War, managed in this way, and with these results, became to Rome what commerce or rural industry is to other countries, viz., the only hopeful and general way for making a fortune. *Fourthly*, by means of colonies it was that Rome delivered herself from her surplus population. Prosperous and well-governed, the Roman citizens of each generation outnumbered those of the generation preceding. But the colonies provided outlets for these continual accessions of people, and absorbed them faster than they could arise.* And thus the great original sin of modern States, that heel of Achilles in which they are all vulnerable, and which (generally speaking) becomes more oppressive to the public prosperity as that prosperity happens to be greater, (for in poor

* And in this way we must explain the fact — that, in the many successive enumerations of the people continually noticed by Livy and others, we do not find that sort of multiplication which we might have looked for in a State so ably governed. The truth is, that the continual surpluses had been carried off by the colonizing drain, before they could become noticeable or trouble Rome.

States and under despotic governments this evil does not exist,) that flagrant infirmity of our own country, for which no statesman has devised any commensurate remedy, was to ancient Rome a perpetual foundation and well-head of public strength and enlarged resources. With us of modern times, when population greatly outruns the demand for labor, whether it be under the stimulus of upright government, and just laws justly administered, in combination with the manufacturing system (as in England), or (as in Ireland) under the stimulus of idle habits, cheap subsistence, and a low standard of comfort — we think it much if we can keep down insurrection by the bayonet and the sabre. *Lucro ponamus* is our cry, if we can effect even thus much; whereas Rome, in her simplest and pastoral days, converted this menacing danger and standing opprobrium of modern statesmanship to her own immense benefit. Not satisfied merely to have neutralized it, she drew from it the vital resources of her martial aggrandizement. For, *Fifthly*, these colonies were in two ways made the corner-stones of her martial policy: 1st, They were looked to as nurseries of their armies; during one generation the original colonists, already trained to military habits, were themselves disposable for this purpose on any great emergency; these men transmitted heroic traditions to their posterity; and, at all events, a more robust population was always at hand in agricultural colonies than could be had in the metropolis. Cato the elder, and all the early writers, notice the quality of such levies as being far superior to those drawn from a population of sedentary habits. 2dly, The Italian colonies, one and all, performed the functions which in our day are assigned to garrisoned towns and frontier fortresses. In the earliest times they discharged a still more critical service, by sometimes entirely displacing a hostile population, and more often by dividing it, and breaking its unity. In cases of desperate resistance to the Roman arms, marked by frequent infraction of treaties, it was usual to remove the offending population to a safer situation, separated from Rome by the Tiber; sometimes entirely to disperse and scatter it. But, where these extremities were not called for by expediency or the Roman maxims of justice, it was judged sufficient to *interpolate*, as it were, the hostile people by

colonizations from Rome, which were completely organized * for mutual aid, having officers of all ranks dispersed amongst them, and for overawing the growth of insurrectionary movements amongst their neighbors. Acting on this system, the Roman colonies in some measure resembled the *English Pale*, as existing at one era in Ireland. This mode of service, it is true, became obsolete in process of time, concurrently with the dangers which it was shaped to meet; for the whole of Italy proper, together with that part of Italy called Cisalpine Gaul, was at length reduced to unity and obedience by the almighty republic. But in forwarding that great end, and indispensable condition towards all foreign warfare, no one military engine in the whole armory of Rome availed so much as her Italian colonies. The other use of these colonies, as frontier garrisons, or, at any rate, as interposing between a foreign enemy and the gates of Rome, they continued to perform long after their earlier uses had passed away; and Cicero himself notices their value in this view. ‘*Colonias*,’ says he [*Orat. in Rullum*], ‘sic idoneis in locis contra suspicionem periculi collacarunt, ut esse non oppida Italiæ sed *propugnacula imperii* viderentur.’ Finally, the colonies were the best means of promoting tillage, and the culture of vineyards. And though this service, as regarded the Italian colonies, was greatly defeated in succeeding times by the ruinous largesses of corn [*frumentationes*], and other vices of the Roman policy after the vast revolution effected by universal luxury, it is not the less true that, left to themselves and their natural tendency, the Roman colonies would have yielded this last benefit as certainly as any other. Large volumes exist, illustrated by the learning of Rigaltius, Salmasius, and Goesius, upon the mere technical arrangements of the Roman colonies; and whole libraries might be written on these same colonies, considered as engines of exquisite state policy.

* That is indeed involved in the technical term of *Deductio*; for unless the ceremonies, religious and political, of inauguration and organization, were duly complied with, the colony was not entitled to be considered as *deducta* — that is, solemnly and ceremonially transplanted from the metropolis.

NOTE 56. Page 191.

On this occasion we may notice that the final execution of the vengeance projected by Maternus, was reserved for a public festival, exactly corresponding to the modern *carnival*; and from an expression used by Herodian, it is plain that *masquerading* had been an ancient practice in Rome.

NOTE 57. Page 192.

See Casaubon's notes upon Theophrastus.

NOTE 58. Page 193.

Viz. the Temple of Peace; at that time the most magnificent edifice in Rome. Temples, it is well known, were the places used in ancient times as banks of deposit. For this function they were admirably fitted by their inviolable sanctity.

NOTE 59. Page 194.

What a prodigious opportunity for the zoölogist! — And considering that these shows prevailed for five hundred years, during all which period the amphitheatre gave bounties, as it were, to the hunter and the fowler of every climate, and that, by means of a stimulus so constantly applied, scarcely any animal, the shyest, rarest, fiercest, escaped the demands of the arena, — no one fact so much illustrates the inertia of the public mind in those days, and the indifference to all scientific pursuits, as that no annotator should have risen to Pliny the elder: — no rival to the immortal tutor of Alexander.

NOTE 60. Page 198.

It is worthy of notice, that, under any suspension of the imperial power or office, the senate was the body to whom the Roman mind even yet continued to turn. In this case, both to color their crime with a show of public motives, and to interest this great body in their own favor by associating them in their

owl dangers, the conspirators pretended to have found a long roll of senatorial names included in the same page of condemnation with their own. A manifest fabrication.

NOTE 61. Page 199.

Historians have failed to remark the contradiction between this statement and the allegation that Lætus selected Pertinax for the throne on a consideration of his ability to protect the assassins of Commodus.

NOTE 62. Page 200.

[“*Didius:*” — The reader will find an amusing reference to this imperial bidder in “Orthographic Mutineers,” Vol. IV. p. 489, of the present series of De Quincey’s writings.]

NOTE 63. Page 213.

“*The completion of a thousand years,*”—i. e., of a thousand years since the foundation of Rome, and not (let the reader observe) since the birth of Romulus. Subtract from 1000 (as the total lapse of years since the natal day of Rome) the number 247 as representing that part of the 1000 which had accumulated since the era of Christ, at the epoch of the Secular Games, and there will remain 753 for the sum of the years between Rome’s nativity and the year of our Lord. But as Romulus must have reached manhood when he founded the robber city, suppose him 23 years old at that era, and his birth will fall in the year 776 before Christ. And this is the year generally assigned. But it must be remembered that there are dissentient schemes of chronology.

NOTE 64. Page 223.

And it is a striking illustration of the extent to which the revolution had gone, that, previously to the Persian expedition of the last Gordian, Antioch, the Roman capital of Syria, had been occupied by the enemy.

NOTE 65. Page 224.

This Arab emperor reigned about five years; and the jubilee celebration occurred in his second year. Another circumstance

gives importance to the Arabian that, according to one tradition, he was the first Christian emperor. If so, it is singular that one of the bitterest persecutors of Christianity should have been his immediate successor — Decius.

NOTE 66. Page 224.

It has proved a most difficult problem, in the hands of all speculators upon the imperial history, to fathom the purposes, or throw any light upon the purposes, of the Emperor Decius, in attempting the revival of the ancient but necessarily obsolete office of a public censorship. Either it was an act of pure verbal pedantry, or a mere titular decoration of honor, (as if a modern prince should create a person Arch-Grand-Elector, with no objects assigned to his electing faculty,) or else, if it really meant to revive the old duties of the censorship, and to assign the very same field for the exercise of those duties, it must be viewed as the very grossest practical anachronism that has ever been committed. We mean by an anachronism, in common usage, that sort of blunder when a man ascribes to one age the habits, customs, or generally the characteristics of another. This, however, may be a mere lapse of memory, as to a matter of fact, and implying nothing at all discreditable to the understanding, but only that a man has shifted the boundaries of chronology a little this way or that; as if, for example, a writer should speak of printed books as existing at the day of Agincourt, or of artillery as existing in the first Crusade, here would be an error, but a venial one. A far worse kind of anachronism, though rarely noticed as such, is where a writer ascribes sentiments and modes of thought incapable of co-existing with the sort or the degree of civilization then attained, or otherwise incompatible with the structure of society in the age or the country assigned. For instance, in Southey's Don Roderick there is a cast of sentiment in the Gothic king's remorse and contrition of heart, which has struck many readers as utterly unsuitable to the social and moral development of that age, and redolent of modern methodism. This, however, we mention only as an illustration, without wishing to hazard an opinion upon the justice of that criticism. But even such an anachronism is less startling and extravagant

when it is confined to an ideal representation of things, than where it is practically embodied and brought into play amongst the realities of life. What would be thought of a man who should attempt, in 1833, to revive the ancient office of *Fool*, as it existed down to the reign, suppose, of our Henry VIII. in England? Yet the error of the Emperor Decius was far greater, if he did in sincerity and good faith believe that the Rome of his times was amenable to that license of unlimited correction, and of interference with private affairs, which republican freedom and simplicity had once conceded to the censor. In reality, the ancient censor, in some parts of his office, was neither more nor less than a compendious legislator. *Acts of attainder*, divorce bills, &c., illustrates the case in England; they are cases of law, modified to meet the case of an individual; and the censor, having a sort of equity jurisdiction, was intrusted with discretionary powers for reviewing, revising, and amending, *pro re nata*, whatever in the private life of a Roman citizen seemed, to his experienced eye, alien to the simplicity of an austere republic; whatever seemed vicious or capable of becoming vicious, according to their rude notions of political economy; and, generally, whatever touched the interests of the commonwealth, though not falling within the general province of legislation, either because it might appear undignified in its circumstances, or too narrow in its range of operation for a public anxiety, or because considerations of delicacy and prudence might render it unfit for a public scrutiny. Take one case, drawn from actual experience, as an illustration: A Roman nobleman, under one of the early emperors, had thought fit, by way of increasing his income, to retire into rural lodgings, or into some small villa, whilst his splendid mansion in Rome was let to a rich tenant. That a man who wore the *lacticlave*, (which in practical effect of splendor we may consider equal to the ribbon and star of a modern order,) should descend to such a degrading method of raising money, was felt as a scandal to the whole nobility.* Yet what could be done? To have

* This feeling still exists in France. ‘One winter,’ says the author of *The English Army in France*, vol. ii. p. 106 - 7, ‘our commanding officer’s wife formed the project of hiring the

interfered with his conduct by an express law, would be to infringe the sacred rights of property, and to say, in effect, that a man should not do what he would with his own. This would have been a remedy far worse than the evil to which it was applied; nor could it have been possible so to shape the principle of a law, as not to make it far more comprehensible than was desired. The senator's trespass was in a matter of decorum, but the law would have trespassed on the first principles of justice. Here, then, was a case within the proper jurisdiction of the censor; he took notice, in his public report, of the sena-

chateau during the absence of the owner ; but a more profound insult could not have been offered to a Chevalier de St. Louis. Hire his house ! What could these people take him for ? A sordid wretch who would stoop to make money by such means ? They ought to be ashamed of themselves. He could never respect an Englishman again.' 'And yet,' adds the writer, 'this gentleman (had an officer been billeted there) would have sold him a bottle of wine out of his cellar, or a billet of wood from his stack, or an egg from his hen-house, at a profit of fifty per cent., not only without scruple, but upon no other terms. It was as common as ordering wine at a tavern, to call the servant of any man's establishment where we happened to be quartered, and demand an account of his cellar, as well as the price of the wine we selected !' This feeling existed, and perhaps to the same extent, two centuries ago, in England. Not only did the aristocracy think it a degradation to act the part of landlord with respect to their own houses, but also, except in select cases, to act that of tenant. Thus, the first Lord Brooke (the famous Fulke Greville), writing to inform his next neighbor, a woman of rank, that the house she occupied had been purchased by a London citizen, confesses his fears that he shall in consequence lose so valuable a neighbor; for, doubtless he adds, your ladyship will not remain as tenant to 'such a fellow.' And yet the man had notoriously held the office of Lord Mayor, which made him, for the time, *Right Honorable*. The Italians of this day make no scruple to let off the whole, or even part, of their fine mansions to strangers.

or's error; or probably, before coming to that extremity, he admonished him privately on the subject. Just as, in England, had there been such an officer, he would have reproved those men of rank who mounted the coach-box, who extended a public patronage to the 'fancy,' or who rode their own horses at a race. Such a reproof, however, unless it were made practically operative, and were powerfully supported by the whole body of the aristocracy, would recoil upon its author as a piece of impertinence, and would soon be resented as an unwarrantable liberty taken with private life; the censor would be kicked or challenged to private combat, according to the taste of the parties aggrieved. The office is clearly in this dilemma: if the censor is supported by the State, then he combines in his own person both legislative and executive functions, and possesses a power which is frightfully irresponsible; if, on the other hand, he is left to such support as he can find in the prevailing spirit of manners, and the old traditional veneration for his sacred character, he stands very much in the situation of a priesthood, which has great power or none at all, according to the condition of a country in moral and religious feeling, coupled with the more or less primitive state of manners. How, then, with any rational prospect of success, could Decius attempt the revival of an office depending so entirely on moral supports, in an age when all those supports were withdrawn? The prevailing spirit of manners was hardly fitted to sustain even a toleration of such an office; and as to the traditional veneration for the sacred character, from long disuse of its practical functions, *that* probably was altogether extinct. If these considerations are plain and intelligible even to us, by the men of that day they must have been felt with a degree of force that could leave no room for doubt or speculation on the matter. How was it, then, that the emperor only should have been blind to such general light?

In the absence of all other, even plausible, solutions of this difficulty, we shall state our own theory of the matter. Decius, as is evident from his fierce persecution of the Christians, was not disposed to treat Christianity with indifference, under any form which it might assume, or however masked. Yet there were quarters in which it lurked not liable to the ordinary modes of attack. Christianity was creeping up with inaudible

steps into high places — nay, into the very highest. The immediate predecessor of Decius upon the throne, Philip the Arab, was known to be a disciple of the new faith; and amongst the nobles of Rome, through the females and the slaves, that faith had spread its roots in every direction. Some secrecy, however, attached to the profession of a religion so often proscribed. Who should presume to tear away the mask which prudence or timidity had taken up? A *delator*, or professional informer, was an infamous character. To deal with the noble and illustrious, the descendants of the Marcelli and the Gracchi, there must be nothing less than a great state officer, supported by the censor and the senate, having an unlimited privilege of scrutiny and censure, authorized to inflict the brand of infamy for offences not challenged by express law, and yet emanating from an elder institution, familiar to the days of reputed liberty. Such an officer was the censor; and such were the antichristian purposes of Decius in his revival.

NOTE 67. Page 228.

Some of these traditions have been preserved, which represent Sapor as using his imperial captive for his stepping-stone, or *anabathrum*, in mounting his horse. Others go farther, and pretend that Sapor actually flayed his unhappy prisoner while yet alive. The temptation to these stories was perhaps found in the craving for the marvellous, and in the desire to make the contrast more striking between the two extremes in Valerian's life.

NOTE 68. Page 228.

Palmyra, the Scriptural *Tadmor in the wilderness*, to which in our days Lady Hester Stanhope (niece to the great minister Pitt, and seventy times seven more orientally proud, though daughter of the freeborn nation, than ever was Zenobia that from infancy trod on the necks of slaves) made her way from Damascus, at some risk, amongst clouds of Arabs, she riding the whole way on horseback in the centre of robber tribes, and with a train such as that of sultans or of Roman pro-consuls.

NOTE 69. Page 229

And this incompetency was *permanently* increased by rebellions that were brief and fugitive : for each insurgent almost necessarily maintained himself for the moment by spoliations and robberies which left lasting effects behind them ; and too often he was tempted to ally himself with some foreign enemy amongst the barbarians ; and perhaps to introduce him into the heart of the empire.

NOTE 70. Page 230.

"Balkan :" — A Russian general in our own day, for crossing this difficult range of mountains as a victor, was by the Czar Nicholas raised to the title of *Balkanski*. But it seems there should rightfully have been an elder creation. Claudius might have pre-occupied the ground, as the original *Balkanski*.

NOTE 71. Page 232.

Zenobia is complimented by all historians for her magnanimity; but with no foundation in truth. Her first salutation to Aurelian was a specimen of abject flattery; and her last public words were evidences of the basest treachery in giving up her generals, and her chief counsellor Longinus, to the vengeance of the ungenerous enemy.

NOTE 72. Page 232.

"Difficulty!" — Difficulty from what ? We presume from scarcity of provisions, and (as regarded the siege) scarcity of wood. But mark how these vaunted and vaunting Romans, so often as they found themselves in our modern straits, sat down to cry. Heavier by far have been our British perplexities upon many an Oriental field ; but did we sit down to cry ?

NOTE 73 Page 236.

"A fortune of three millions sterling :" — Whence came these enormous fortunes ? Several sources might be indicated ; but amongst them perhaps the commonest was this — every citizen of marked distinction made it a practice, if circumstances favored, to leave a legacy to others of the same class whom he

happened to esteem, or wished to acknowledge as special friends **A very good custom**, more honoured in the observance than the **breach**, and particularly well suited to our own merits.

NOTE 74. Page 245.

'Thirteen thousand chambers.'—The number of the chambers in this prodigious palace is usually estimated at that amount. But Lady Miller, who made particular inquiries on this subject, ascertained that the total amount, including cellars and closets, capable of receiving a bed, was fifteen thousand.

NOTE 75. Page 248.

In no point of his policy was the cunning or the sagacity of Augustus so much displayed, as in his treaty of partition with the senate, which settled the distribution of the provinces, and their future administration. Seeming to take upon himself all the trouble and hazard, he did in effect appropriate all the power, and left to the senate little more than trophies of show and ornament. As a first step, all the greater provinces, as Spain and Gaul, were subdivided into many smaller ones. This done, Augustus proposed that the senate should preside over the administration of those amongst them which were peaceably settled, and which paid a regular tribute; whilst all those which were the seats of danger,—either as being exposed to hostile inroads, or to internal commotions,—all, therefore, in fact, *which could justify the keeping up of a military force*, he assigned to himself. In virtue of this arrangement, the senate possessed in Africa those provinces which had been formed out of Carthage, Cyrene, and the kingdom of Numidia; in Europe, the richest and most quiet part of Spain (*Hispania Baetica,*) with the large islands of Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, and Crete, and some districts of Greece; in Asia, the kingdoms of Pontus and Bithynia, with that part of Asia Minor technically called Asia; whilst, for his own share, Augustus retained Gaul, Syria, the chief part of Spain, and Egypt, the granary of Rome finally, all the military posts on the Euphrates, on the Danube, or the Rhine.

Yet even the showy concessions here made to the senate were

defeated by another political institution, settled at the same time. It had been agreed that the governors of provinces should be appointed by the emperor and the senate jointly. But within the senatorial jurisdiction, these governors, with the title of *Proconsuls*, were to have no military power whatsoever; and the appointments were good only for a single year. Whereas, in the imperatorial provinces, where the governor bore the title of *Proprætor*, there was provision made for a military establishment; and as to duration, the office was regulated entirely by the emperor's pleasure. One other ordinance, on the same head, riveted the vassalage of the senate. Hitherto, a great source of the senate's power had been found in the uncontrolled management of the provincial revenues; but at this time, Augustus so arranged that branch of the administration, that, throughout the senatorian or proconsular provinces, all taxes were immediately paid into the *ærarium*, or treasury of the State; whilst the whole revenues of the proprætorian (or imperatorial) provinces, from this time forward, flowed into the *fiscus*, or private treasure of the individual emperor.

NOTE 76. Page 253.

On the abdication of Dioclesian and of Maximian, Galerius and Constantius succeeded as the new Augusti. But Galerius, as the more immediate representative of Dioclesian, thought himself entitled to appoint both Cæsars,—the Daza (or Maximus) in Syria, Severus in Italy. Meantime, Constantine, the son of Constantius, with difficulty obtaining permission from Galerius paid a visit to his father; upon whose death, which followed soon after, Constantine came forward as a Cæsar, under the appointment of his father. Galerius submitted with a bad grace; but Maxentius, a reputed son of Maximian, was roused by emulation with Constantine to assume the purple; and being joined by his father, they jointly attacked and destroyed Severus. Galerius, to revenge the death of his own Cæsar, advanced towards Rome; but being compelled to a disastrous retreat, he resorted to the measure of associating another emperor with himself, as a balance to his new enemies. This was Licinius; and thus, at one time, there were six emperors, either

as Augusti or as Cæsars. Galerius, however, dying, all the rest were in succession destroyed by Constantine.

NOTE 77. Page 254

Valentinian the First, who admitted his brother Valens to a partnership in the empire, had, by his first wife, an elder son, Gratian, who reigned and associated with himself Theodosius, commonly called the Great. By his second wife he had Valentinian the Second, who, upon the death of his brother Gratian, was allowed to share the empire by Theodosius. Theodosius, by his first wife, had two sons, — Arcadius, who afterwards reigned in the east, and Honorius, whose western reign was so much illustrated by Stilicho. By a second wife, daughter to Valentinian the First, Theodosius had a daughter, (half-sister, therefore, to Honorius, whose son was Valentinian the Third; and through this alliance it was that the two last emperors of conspicuous mark united their two houses, and entwined their separate ciphers, so that more gracefully, and with the commensurate grandeur of a doubleheaded eagle looking east and west to the rising, but also, alas! to the setting sun, the brother Cæsars might take leave of the children of Romulus in the pathetic but lofty words of the departing gladiators, *Morituri*, we that are now to die, *vos salutamus*, make our farewell salutation to you!

NOTE 78. Page 265.

Even here there is a risk of being misunderstood. Some will read this term *ex parte* in the sense, that now there are no neutral statements surviving. But such statements there never were. The controversy moving for a whole century in Rome before Pharsalia, was not about facts, but about constitutional principles; and as to that question there could be no neutrality. From the nature of the case, the truth must have lain with one of the parties; compromise, or intermediate temperament, was inapplicable. What we complain of as overlooked is, not that the surviving records of the quarrel are partisan records (that being a mere necessity,) but in the forensic use of the

term *ex parte*, that they are such without benefit of equilibrium or modification from the partisan statements in the opposite interest.

NOTE 79. Page 266.

Cicero in Seinen Briefen, VON BERNHARD RUDOLF ABSKEM,
Professor am Raths-Gymnas, zu Osnabrück. Hanover, 1835.

NOTE 80. Page 268.

‘*Hatred.*’ — It exemplifies the pertinacity of this hatred to mention, that Middleton was one of the men who sought, for twenty years, some historical facts that might conform to Leslie’s four conditions, (*Short Method with the Deists,*) and yet evade Leslie’s logic. We think little of Leslie’s argument, which never could have been valued by a sincerely religious man. But the rage of Middleton, and his perseverance, illustrate his temper of warfare.

NOTE 81. Page 270.

‘*Rich.*’ — We may consider Cicero as worth, in a case of necessity, at least £400,000. Upon that part of this property which lay in money, there was always a very high interest to be obtained ; but not so readily a good security for the principal. The means of increasing this fortune by marriage was continually offering to a leading senator, such as Cicero, and the facility of divorce aided this resource.

NOTE 82. Page 283.

‘*Laurcl crown.*’ — Amongst the honors granted to Pompey at a very early period, was the liberty to wear a diadem or *corona* on ceremonial occasions. The common reading was ‘*auream coronam*’ until Lipsius suggested *lauream* ; which correction has since been generally adopted into the text. This distinction is remarkable when contrasted with the same trophy as after-

wards conceded to Cæsar, in relation to the popular feelings, so different in the two cases.

NOTE 83. Page 315.

'Of the superb Aurelian :' — The particular occasion was the insurrection in the East, of which the ostensible leaders were the great lieutenants of Palmyra — Odenathus, and his widow, Zenobia. The alarm at Rome was out of all proportion to the danger, and well illustrated the force of the great historian's aphorism — *Omne ignotum pro magnifico*. In one sentence of his despatch, Aurelian aimed at a contest with the great Julian gasconade of *Veni, vidi, vici*. His words are — **Fugavimus, obsedimus, cruciavimus, occidimus.**

NOTE 84. Page 322.

'Pretended barbarians, Gothic, Vandalish,' &c. — Had it been true that these tramontane people were as ferocious in manners or appearance as was alleged, it would not therefore have followed that they were barbarous in their modes of thinking and feeling; or, if that also had been true, surely it became the Romans to recollect what very barbarians, both in mind, and manners, and appearance, were some of their own Cæsars. Meantime it appears, that not only Alaric the Goth, but even Attila the Hun, in popular repute the most absolute Ogre of all the Transalpine invaders, turns out in more thoughtful representations to have been a prince of peculiarly mild demeanor, and apparently upright character.

NOTE 85. Page 326.

'Eaten a dish of boiled hippopotamus :' — We once thought that some error might exist in the text — *edisse* for *edidisse* — and that a man exposed a hippopotamus at the games of the amphitheatre ; but we are now satisfied that he ate the hippopotamus.

NOTE 86. Page 329.

'All had been forgotten.' — It is true that the Augustan writer, rather than appear to know nothing at all, tells a most

Idle fable about a *scurra* having intruded into Cæsar's tent, and upon finding the young Emperor awake, had excited his comrades to the murder for fear of being punished for his insolent intrusion. But the whole story is nonsense ; a camp legend, or at the best a fable put forth by the real conspirators to mask the truth. The writer did not believe it himself. By the way, a *scurra* does not retain its classical sense of a buffoon in the Augustan History ; it means a σωματοῦ υλεῖ, or body-guard ; ut why, is yet undiscovered. Our own belief is — that the word is a Thracian or a Gothic word ; the body-guards being derived from those nations.

NOTE 87. Page 382.

Geographie des Herodot — dargestellt von Hermann Bobrik Koenigsberg, 1838.

NOTE 88. Page 386.

But — ‘How has it prevailed,’ some will ask, ‘if an error : Have not great scholars sate upon Herodotus?’ Doubtless, many. There is none greater, for instance, merely as a verbal scholar, than Valckenaer. Whence we conclude that inevitably this error has been remarked somewhere. And as to the erroneous Latin version still keeping its ground, partly that may be due to the sort of superstition which everywhere protects old usages in formal situations like a title-page, partly to the fact that there is no happy Latin word to express ‘Researches.’ But, however, that may be, all the scholars in the world cannot get rid of the evidence involved in the general use of the word *Historia* by Herodotus.

NOTE 89. Page 392.

• *Two-horned*,’ in one view, as having no successor, Alexander was called the *one-horned*. But it is very singular that all Oriental nations, without knowing anything of the scriptural symbols under which Alexander is described by Daniel as the strong he-goat who butted against the ram of Persia, have always called him the ‘two-horned,’ with a covert allusion to

is European and his Asiatic kingdom. And it is equally singular, that unintentionally this symbol falls in with Alexander's own assumption of a descent from Libyan Jupiter-Ammon, to whom the double horns were an indispensable and characteristic symbol.

NOTE 90. Page 393.

Viz. (as I believe), by Vicesimus Knox — a writer now entirely forgotten. “*Father of History* you call him? Much rather the *Father of Lies*.”

NOTE 91. Page 397.

Which edition the arrogant Mathias in his *Pursuits of Literature*, (by far the most popular of books from 1797 to 1802,) highly praised; though otherwise amusing himself with the folly of the other gray-headed men contending for a schoolboy's prize. It was the loss of dignity, however, in the translator, not their worthless Greek, which he saw cause to ridicule.

NOTE 92. Page 402.

Which word *India*, it must be remembered, was liable to no such equivocation as it is now. *India* meant simply the land of the river Indus, i. e., all the territory lying eastward of that river down to the mouths of the Ganges; and the Indians meant simply the Hindoos, or natives of Hindostan. Whereas, at present, we give a secondary sense to the word *Indian*, applying it to a race of savages in the New World, viz., to all the *aboriginal* natives of the American continent, and also to the *aboriginal* natives of all the islands scattered over the Pacific Ocean to the west of that continent; and all the islands in the Gulf of Mexico to the east of it. Standing confusion has thus been introduced into the acceptation of the word *Indian*; a confusion corresponding to that which besieged the ancient use of the term *Scythian*, and, in a minor degree, the term *Ethiopian*.

NOTE 93. Page 453.

But how like Homer? Homer, and most other classical narrative poets, move indifferently (and perhaps equally) by inter-

change of speeches, sometimes colloquial and gossiping, sometimes stately and haranguing. Plato forgets his Homer.

NOTE 94. Page 454.

Probably :—more than probably, I fear : Plato, it may be suspected, cultivated the arts of petty larceny to an extent that was far from philosophic. I said nothing, but winked at his dishonesty, when some pages back he thought proper to charge upon Homer and Hesiod the monstrous forgery of Jupiter Optimus Maximus and all Olympus, nothing less (if the reader will believe me) than the whole Pantheon. But in fact that charge was fraudulently appropriated by Plato from a better man, viz., Herodotus, who must have been fifty years older than the philosopher. And now at this point again we find the philosopher filching from Euripides !

NOTE 95. Page 471.

What I mean is — that each individual amongst the women could know for certain whether she ever had been a parent, though not whether she still continued such : but to the men even this limited knowledge was denied. Their own hypothetic interest in the young rear-guard who were snatching a holiday spectacle from the bloody conflict of their possible papas, would therefore reasonably sink below zero. It is to be hoped that Plato would not forbid the soldiers to distribute an occasional kicking amongst these young scoundrels, who would doubtless be engaged in betting on the several events as at a main of game cocks — an amusement so extensively patronized by Plato himself.

NOTE 96. Page 484.

‘*In procinct :*’ — Milton’s translation (somewhere in ~~the~~ Paradise Regained’) of the technical phrase ‘in procinctu.’

NOTE 97. Page 485.

‘*Geologists know not :*’ — In man the sixtieth part of six thousand years is a very venerable age. But as to a planet, as to our little earth, instead of arguing dotage, six thousand years may have scarcely carried her beyond babyhood. Some people think she is cutting her first teeth; some think her in her teens. But,

seriously, it is a very interesting problem. Do the sixty centuries of our earth imply youth, maturity, or dotage?

NOTE 98. Page 486.

'Everywhere the ancients went to bed, like good boys, from seven to nine o'clock :' — As I am perfectly serious, I must beg the reader, who fancies any joke in all this, to consider what an immense difference it must have made to the earth, considered as a steward of her own resources — whether great nations, in a period when their resources were so feebly developed, did, or did not, for many centuries, require candles; and, I may add, fire. The five heads of human expenditure are — 1. Food; 2. Shelter; 3. Clothing; 4. Fuel; 5. Light. All were pitched on a lower scale in the Pagan era; and the two last were almost banished from ancient housekeeping. What a great relief this must have been to our good mother the earth! who at *first* was obliged to request of her children that they would settle round the Mediterranean. She could not even afford them water, unless they would come and fetch it themselves out of a common tank or cistern.

NOTE 99. Page 487.

'The mane salutantes :' — There can be no doubt that the *levees* of modern princes and ministers have been inherited from this ancient usage of Rome; one which belonged to Rome republican, as well as Rome imperial. The fiction in our modern practice is — that we wait upon the *lever*, or rising of the prince. In France, at one era, this fiction was realized: the courtiers did really attend the king's dressing. And, as to the queen, even up to the Revolution, Marie Antoinette gave audience at her toilette.

NOTE 100. Page 490.

'Or again, "siccum pro biscooto, ut hodie vocamus, sumemus?"' — It is odd enough that a scholar so complete as Salmasius, whom nothing ever escapes, should have overlooked so obvious an alternative as that of *siccus* in the sense of being without *opsonium* — *Scoticè*, without 'kitchen.'

NOTE 101. Page 492.

‘*The whole amount of relief:*’ — From which it appears how grossly Locke (see his ‘Education’) was deceived in fancying that Augustus practised any remarkable abstinence in taking only a bit of bread and a raisin or two, by way of luncheon. Augustus did no more than most people did; secondly, he abstained only upon principles of luxury with a view to dinner; and thirdly, for this dinner he never waited longer than up to four o’clock.

NOTE 102. Page 498.

‘*Mansiones:*’ — The halts of the Roman legions, the stationary places of repose which divided the marches, were so called.

NOTE 103. Page 503.

‘*The Everlasting Jew:*’ — The German name for what we English call the Wandering Jew. The German imagination has been most struck by the duration of the man’s life, and his unhappy sanctity from death; the English, by the unrestingness of the man’s life, his incapacity of repose.

NOTE 104. Page 509.

‘*Immeasurable toga:*’ — It is very true that in the time of Augustus the *toga* had disappeared amongst the lowest plebs, and greatly Augustus was shocked at that spectacle. It is a very curious fact in itself, especially as expounding the main cause of the civil wars. Mere poverty, and the absence of bribery from Rome, whilst all popular competition for offices drooped, can alone explain this remarkable revolution of dress.

NOTE 105. Page 517.

‘*His young English Bride:*’ — The case of an old man, or one reputed old, marrying a very girlish wife, is always too much for the gravity of history; and, rather than lose the joke, the historian prudently disguises the age, which, after all, in this case was not above fifty-four. And the very persons who insist

on the late dinner as the proximate cause of death, elsewhere insinuate something more plausible, but not so decorously expressed. It is odd that this amiable prince, so memorable as having been a martyr to late dining at eleven A. M., was the same person who is so equally memorable for the noble, almost the sublime, answer about a King of France not remembering the wrongs of a Duke of Orleans.

NOTE 106. Page 520

‘*Took their cæna at noon:*’ — And, by the way, in order to show how little *cæna* had to do with any evening hour (though, in any age but that of our fathers, four in the afternoon would never have been thought an evening hour), the Roman *gourmands* and *bons vivants* continued through the very last ages of Rome to take their *cæna*, when more than usually sumptuous, at noon. This, indeed, all people did occasionally, just as we sometimes give a dinner even now so early as four P. M., under the name of a breakfast. Those who took their *cæna* so early as this, were said *de die cœnare* — to begin dining from high day. That line in Horace — ‘*Ut jugulent homines, surgunt de nocte latrones*’ — does not mean that the robbers rise when others are going to bed, viz., at nightfall, but at midnight. For, says one of the three best scholars of this earth, *de die, de nocte*, mean from that hour which was most fully, most intensely day or night, viz., the centre, the meridian. This one fact is surely a clincher as to the question whether *cæna* meant dinner or supper.

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